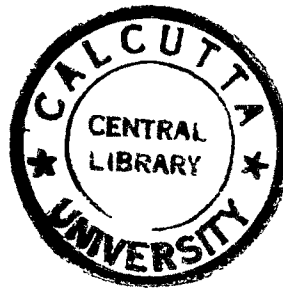


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GWALIOR AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

1817 - 1844

SCANNED



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C O N T E N T S

	Preface	
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	EXTENSION OF BRITISH INFLUENCE	22
III.	THE SUCCESSION QUESTION	48
IV.	THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION : THE CRISIS PRECIPITATED	78
V.	THE CIVIL WAR, 1833 : FALL OF BAIZABAI	106
VI.	THE GWALIOR REFORMED CONTINGENT	142
VII.	THE ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFERENCE	158
VIII.	THE TREATY OF 1844	204
IX.	CONCLUSION	231
	<u>Bibliography</u>	254
	GLOSSARY	259

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REFERENCES

For. Sec. Cons	- Foreign Secret Consultation.
For. Pol. Cons	- Foreign Political Consultation.
C.I.A.R.	- Central India Agency Record.
B.C.	- Correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck.
B.P.	- Bentinck Papers.
B.M. Add. MSS	- British Museum Additional Manuscripts.
E.P.	- Ellenborough Paper.
S.I.S.	- Shindesahi Itihasanchi Sadhanen.

P R E F A C E

The scope of the present work is confined strictly to the political and diplomatic relations of the State of Gwalior and the East India Company in India in the years from 1817 to 1844; the domestic history of Gwalior during this period is, therefore, beyond my province. I have, however, referred frequently to domestic events at Gwalior to depict its relations with the English in a fuller and clear manner. A complete and synoptic narrative of the State of Gwalior and the East India Company spanning the eventful period from 1817 to 1844 is lacking and Grant Duff and other authors have made only a cursory reference to this neglected episode of the history of the Marathas.

The predominant position which Gwalior had enjoyed in the second half of the eighteenth century in the affairs of both Poona and Delhi was due largely to the military and diplomatic genius of Mahadji Sindhia, the maker of modern Gwalior. It was, however, due no less to the policy of neutrality pursued by the Company's Government in the affairs of the Indian States during this period. But the wars of Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings, reduced much of the political and military influence of Gwalior and by the end of 1817, it had come to accept the Company's Government as its supreme head. The relations between the Company's Government and Gwalior now revolved round the question whether the latter was to be left free in its internal affairs. By the terms of the Treaty of 1817 and the declared policy of the authorities in London, the Company's Government was not to interfere in any manner in the internal administration of Gwalior. But the Second and Third Maratha wars had exposed the weakness

(ii)

of Gwalior, a feudal state erected solely on militarism. A decrepit finance, rebellious chiefs and unruly soldiery - all these created within Gwalior a situation to which the Company's Government in India did not want to remain a silent spectator as a chaotic condition within the State threatened the peace and tranquillity of the adjoining territories. When, therefore, the Gwalior Government sought the British military aid for suppressing the recalcitrant chiefs, the Company's Government readily gave it, knowing fully well that a dispute between the Maharaja and his chiefs constituted an internal matter of Gwalior. In fact, Lord Hastings' policy was to make Gwalior a dependent of the Company's Government and therefore, he granted British aid to the State. At the same time the Governor-General took advantage of the helpless condition of the Maharaja in securing his consent to keeping permanently the Contingent composed of select Gwalior troops and paid by the State, but officered by the British. It gave the Company's Government a controlling influence over Sindhia's army and his affairs. These developments constitute the subject matter of the first two chapters.

In Chapter III I have tried to show that British interference in the internal affairs of Gwalior was not always guided solely by considerations of peace and tranquillity. Other considerations were also involved. For example, in preferring Baizabai, the junior widow of Daulatrao, to Rukmabai, the senior widow, as the Regent of the Gwalior State, Lord Amherst's object was to secure from Baizabai a loan of money.

The contents of the Chapters IV and V will show how Lord William Bentinck pushed the policy of non-interference to such extremes as to precipitate a civil war within Gwalior. Both Regent Baizabai and the young

(iii)

Maharaja Jankojirao had appealed to Bentinck to decide as to who - the Regent or the Maharaja - should be the sovereign authority in the State. But Bentinck refused to interfere in the matter and left the issue to be decided by the parties themselves. The result was the civil war of 1833 and the fall of Baizabai.

One of the underlying causes of interference in Gwalior was a desire on the part of the Company's Government to remove a strong personality from the helm of affairs. When Lord Ellenborough taking advantages of the minority of both Regent Tarabai and the Maharaja Jayajirao, nominated pro-British Mama Sahib, as the Regent and tried to bring Gwalior under complete control of the Company's Government, Dada Khasjiwala built up the resistance against the English encroachment on Gwalior. It was by military threat that Ellenborough secured the dismissal of Dada. Thereafter, the Governor-General dictated a peace to the Gwalior Government the working of which led to the loss of internal independence of Gwalior although the State was not formally annexed by the Company. All these have been fully discussed in Chapters VI, VII & VIII.

Vast masses of unpublished documents from the National Archives of India, New Delhi, the British Museum and the Public Record Office, London and the Nottingham University Library, England - have been fully utilised to make the history of this period as complete as possible. Historical materials in Marathi language - though not copious for this period - have not been neglected. A critical analysis of various sources - English, Marathi and Persian - reveals the cross-currents of Maratha politics at Gwalior and the finesse of British diplomacy which ultimately enmeshed the Sindhian State in 1844.

C H A P T E R - I

INTRODUCTION

The Maratha State which had been undergoing the process of feudalization since the death of Sivaji, at last split into several provincial dynastic states in the first half of the eighteenth century. The Sindhia State of Gwalior¹ proved to be the most powerful of them. Its founder was Ranoji Sindhia². He began his career as a bargir or paid horseman under the first Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath.

1. The State of Gwalior takes its name from its famous fortress build on an isolated flat-topped hill which was known in ancient times as Gopa Parvat, Gopagiri or Gopadri, meaning the cow-herds' hill. The founding of the fortress is attributed to the Kachhwa chief named Suraj Sen. He was a leper, and one day when thirsty with hunting near the hill for water, The hermit gave him some water in his own vessel, and no sooner had he drunk it than he was cured of leprosy. The grateful Prince then asked what he could do for the holyman, and he was directed to build a fort on the hill. Suraj Sen accordingly built the fortress, which he named after the hermit Gwali-awar or Gwalior, as it is now written. In 1755 the Marathas conquered the fort from the Mughals; but in the confusion that followed after the battle of Panipat in 1761, it was seized by the Jat Chief Lokendra Singh of Gohad. The connection of the Gwalior fort with the Sindhia family dated from 1777 when the Peshwas entrusted it to Mahadji Sindhia (A. Cunningham, Archaeological Survey Report, Vol II, pp 372-73 and Gwaliornama translated by B.R.B. Sindhia, pp 1-5).
2. Sir John Malcolm (Memoir of Central India, Vol I, p 116) says that Ranoji was a sudra of the tribe of Kumbhi or cultivators. But this theory of low origin of Ranoji is not corroborated by the writings of the authorities on Maratha history. G.S.Sardesai (Marathi Riyasat, Vol V, pt II p 219) connects Ranoji with the ancient Kashatriya family of 'Sendrak'. The family rose to the royal notice in the time of the Bahamani Kings and their name was corrupted into 'Shinde'. A branch of this family came to hold the position of Patel or headman of the village Kannerkher, twelve miles east of Satara. They also obtained mansabs from the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. Sabitribai, a daughter of this family was given into marriage by Aurangzeb to Sahu when the latter was in Mughal captivity. The family had, however, fallen into decay and it was only under Ranoji's leadership that the Sindhia family came to play an important role in the affairs of the Marathas. See also Kaifiyats, Yadis etc. compiled by G.C. Vad and edited by P.V.Mowjee and D.B.Parasnis, p 91. Also Grant Duff, History of the Marathas, Vol I, pp 313 & 357-358 and M.W.Burway, Life of Ranoji Sindhia, p 31.

after whose death he continued to serve his son, Peshwa Bajirao as the latter's personal attendant. Very soon Ranoji was promoted to the rank of the Peshwa's bodyguard for his sincerity and devotion to his master.³ When Udaji Pawar, who had been sent along with Malharrao, the founder of the Halkar House of Indore, to collect tribute from Malwa, withdrew himself from that province, the Peshwa deemed it unwise to leave the entire province to Holkar alone, Malwa was, therefore, placed under the joint command of Ranoji and Malharrao.⁴ By the settlement of 29 July 1732, both the chiefs received 35% of Malwa jahgirs each⁵, and in 1735 Ranoji made Ujjain his headquarters.

From this humble beginning, the House of Sindhia was made the most powerful branch of the Maratha confederacy by Mahadji Sindhia, Ranoji's only living son after 1761.⁶ Equal status granted by the Peshwa to both Ranoji

3 One day Bajirao, while coming out of the palace after a long audience with King Sahu, found his personal attendant Ranoji lying with his master's slippers firmly clasped to his breast. Struck by this instance of fidelity, the Peshwa promoted Ranoji to the rank of his personal bodyguard. Grant Duff (Vol I pp357-58), however, rejects this story of carrying the Peshwa's slippers by Ranoji, as the latter was related to King Sahu by matrimonial alliance. The purpose of this story, Duff remarks, is to contrast the abject condition to which the family of Sindhia had been reduced with the glorious position to which Ranoji raised it (For a brief but critical discussion on this point vide A.B. Phalke, Sindesaihi Itihasanchi Sadhnen, Vol III, pp 52-53).

4 R. Sinh, Malwa in Transition, pp 277-78.

5 Sindesaihi Itihasanchi Sadhnen, Vol I, pp 3 & 1920.

6 Ranoji died in 1745. By his first wife he had three sons, Jayappa, Dattaji and Jotiba. Ranoji's second wife Chimabai was the mother of Mahadji and Tukoji. Jotiba was killed during his father's life time at Orchha. On the demise of Ranoji, his eldest son Jayappa became the head of the family. He was sent to settle the succession dispute between Ramsing and Beji Singh - the two sons of Abhi Singh, the King of Jodhpur. In 1755 Beji Singh had secretly murdered. Dattaji was killed at Barari Ghat while fighting the Afghans and the Rohillas. In the battle of Panipat (1761) Jankoji, son of Dattaji, and Mahadji's own brother Tukoji, fell fighting. After 1761, therefore, Mahadji was the sole surviving son of Ranoji, but Mahadji's succession to his father's jahgir was not supported by the conservative Maratha Chiefs as his mother was not the properly married wife of Ranoji. But the Peshwa appointed Mahadji the head of the Sindhia State (G.S. Sardesai, Aitihāsik Gharanāncya Vamsavali, p 147, Duff, Vol I, pp 513-514, 516 & 553; Sindesaihi Itihasanchi Sadhnen, Vol III, p 362).

and Malharrao, despite the fact that the latter had begun earlier in the race for greatness, made Holkar jealous of the growing power and influence of Sindhia. The rivalry between the two houses for supremacy in the affairs of the Maratha Confederacy was a principal feature of the Maratha history in the eighteenth century. But while the Holkars only blindly opposed every move made by the Sindhias, the latter always acted on the principle of establishing ^{their} own power by faithfully pursuing the objectives laid down by the Peshwa and bringing them to a successful completion. This required a certain degree of political foresight and military skill. Fortunately, Mahadji Sindhia combined in his person both these admirable qualities. In 1769 Peshwa Madhavrao sent an expedition to North India for restoring Maratha prestige which had almost been eclipsed by the disaster of Panipat (1761). Ramchandra Ganesh was entrusted with the direction of military operations and diplomatic policy, but he was to act with Visaji Krishna as his diwan and Mahadji Sindhia and Tukoji Holkar⁷ as his generals. At this time Emperor Shah Alam II had been residing at Allahabad as a pensioner of the English, and the Rohilla Chief Najib-ud-daula, who was Abdali's principal agent in India, became the ^{virtual} ~~virtual~~ dictator of Delhi. But Najib's tenure of authority in the imperial capital was a precarious one. In the Punjab, the Sikhs were on the move. From Attock to Hardwar they roamed freely and carried their depredations even upto the vicinity of Delhi. South of Delhi, the Jats threatened Najib's supremacy. Sindhia considered the Rohilla chief as the moving spring of all

7 Malcolm says that he was "a chief of the same tribe but in no way related to Malhar Row" (Memoir, I, p 163). Grant Duff (Vol I, p 555) holds the same view. Malharrao died in 1766, without leaving any issue. Ahalyabai, the widow of Malharrao, personally assumed charge of civil administration and entrusted the command of her troops to Tukoji Holkar.

anti-Maratha combinations among the Afghans in the North. Therefore, Mahadji suggested a conciliatory policy towards the Jats whose hostility for the Rohillas and the Afghans was very much well-known. This, Sindhia felt, would make it easier for the Marathas to exterminate Najib and other Rohilla chiefs in the Doab and then establish the Maratha authority in that region. Mahadji was very much confident of Maratha success against the Rohillas, as Ahmad Shah Abdali, Najib's patron, had expressed his pacific intentions to the Marathas⁸. Moreover, it was evident that after his invasion of India in 1767, Abdali would not be in a position to lead another campaign in this country as he had grown in age and his army was in a state of mutiny. But Tukoji Holkar, surrounded as he was by old ministers who "played the rascally game" of continuing Malharrao's policy of hostility towards the Sindhias, advocated a policy of establishing Maratha authority in the Doab in co-operation with Najib. The Peshwa sanctioned the pro-Rohilla policy of Holkar, but the hoped-for recovery of jahgirs and collection of money through Najib's friendly persuasion came to nothing, as had been foreseen by Mahadji. Najib kept the Marathas deluded by his smooth talk, wasted months in hollow negotiations and opened a secret correspondence for uniting all the enemies of the Marathas in the Doab in order to defeat their enterprise⁹. Thus the utter failure of Maratha war and diplomacy in the Doab during 1769-70 totally discredited Holkar and his party in the Council of the Peshwa, while it brought into sharp contrast the political vision of Mahadji Sindhia who had pointed out that Najib could never be a friend of the Marathas. In the conduct of North Indian expeditions Ramchandra was replaced by Visaji Krishna who, henceforth, acted in close concert with Mahadji, and the Marathas achieved a series of

8 Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol III, No 266.

9 J.N. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol III, pp 10-20.

successes. Mahadji understood that the Marathas, unpopular as they were all over North India, would not be able to establish their rule in those parts unless it was 'enveloped in the gilded packing' of Mughal sovereignty. As early as 1768 he had asked Shah Alam to march to Delhi with the help of the Marathas¹⁰. The Emperor, too, was very much eager to return to his ancestral capital. The English had promised to help with troops from 1761 onwards, a pledge always to be honoured 'after the rains'. But Najib's death in October 1770 followed by the assumption of the office of the imperial Regent by his young and inexperienced son, Zabita Khan, made the Emperor very much anxious regarding the safety of his family in Delhi and the future of his throne. In December 1770 he sent his envoy Saifuddin Muhammad Khan to the Maratha Chiefs to hire their armed aid in restoring him to Delhi. Escorted by Mahadji Sindhia, Shah Alam entered the capital on 6 January 1772¹¹. From the day he met the Emperor¹², Mahadji warmed himself into the confidence of the latter with the ultimate object of securing control of the imperial affairs.

Before, however, he could consolidate his position at the imperial court, the war between the English and the Marathas broke out, and it provided Mahadji with an opportunity to make himself the real power behind the Peshwa. On the demise (Nov 1772) of Peshwa Madhavrao, his brother Naryanrao succeeded him. But their uncle Raghunathrao who had all along

10 • Ibid p 23.

11 J.N. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol III, p 23.

12 The interview took place on 18 Nov 1771 at Nabiganj. 'Led by Prince Akbar, Mahadji entered Shah Alam's camp and laid his head at the Emperor's feet, who clasped him to his bosom and long praised him'. (J.N. Sarkar, Delhi Affairs, No. 21b pp 47-48, letter from Delhi 27 Nov 1771).

been trying to capture power at Poona, had the new Peshwa murdered, and himself assumed the charge of the Poona government (August 1773). But Raghunathrao was not destined to enjoy his political primacy for long. A well-concerted opposition grew up against him which gathered momentum after the birth of Narayanrao's posthumous son, Savai Madhavrao. Raghunathrao was cast into political limbo by his opponents, who declared the child the Peshwa. The Poona Government exhibited utter demoralisation when dissensions broke out between two of its principal leaders - Sakharam Bapu and Moroba Farnavis. In March 1778 Moroba's party seized the power at Poona and sought the Bombay Government's assistance to restore Raghunathrao to the Peshwaship. Nana, devoid of any military strength, invited Mahadji to his help. Mahadji isolated Moroba by weaning away Sakharam Bapu and Tukoji Holkar from his side. Then all the principal Maratha chiefs took oaths of allegiance to support the boy Peshwa at the instance of Mahadji¹³. The Marathas, thus reorganized, routed at Talegaon (January 1779) the Bombay army escorting Raghunathrao to Poona, and compelled the English to accept the disgraceful convention of Wadgaon (16 January, 1779). But Governor-General Warren Hastings repudiated the arrangement of Wadgaon and sent Goddard to make peace with the Marathas on terms honourable for the Company. The Poona Government was, however, not inclined to any accommodation with the Company unless Raghunathrao and Salsette were surrendered to it. Goddard attributed this adamant attitude of the Marathas to Mahadji Sindhia whom he regarded as the 'inveterate foe' of the English. It was Sindhia's stiff resistance which prevented Goddard to march with his army from Gujrat to Poona. Both Warren Hastings and Goddard came to the conclusion that unless the Poona Government was deprived of the military support of Sindhia, it would not submit to any peace proposal of the English.

13 V.V. Khare, Aitihasik Lekha Sangraha, Vol VII Letter No. 2371

It was therefore decided to detach Sindhia from the Poona Government by carrying the war in the heart of his territory in Malwa. A subsidiary alliance was concluded with the Rana of Gohad (December 1779) with the object of encouraging the subject states of the Poona Government in Malwa to revolt against the Maratha rule. Captain Popham took possession of the fort of Gwalior, and early in 1781 Colonel Camac inflicted defeat on Sindhia at Sipri. But the Company's precarious state on the Coromandel coast where Haidar Ali was carrying on a vigorous campaign, acted as a brake on Hastings' efforts. Political opinion in Britain was in favour of an early termination of the Maratha war. Hastings found that Nana's astute diplomacy supported by the soldier-statesman Mahadji Sindhia was the cause of the Maratha resistance to the English. Therefore, a separate peace with Sindhia would leave the Marathas with no other alternative but to come to terms with the English.

Sindhia, too, wanted to conclude a separate treaty with the English. In his desire for peace, Sindhia was guided 'more by political considerations than by any other motive'¹⁴. He wanted a free hand in Hindustan, where a separate peace with the Company would afford him ample opportunity for territorial aggrandisement. The Mughal heritage in the north was far more tempting to him than the restricted area of Maharashtra. On 13 October 1781 he concluded a treaty with the British in which he offered to act as a mediator between the Company and the Peshwa. The territory conquered by the English in Bundelkhand should be restored to the Marathas along with the princes that had gone over to the English. Mahadji also conveyed it to Warren Hastings, through Col. Muir, that he claimed an entirely free hand

14 S.N. Sen, Anglo-Maratha Relations, 1772-1785, p 196.

in managing the affairs of north India, particularly of the Emperor. Hastings conceded all the points claimed by Mahadji and the First Anglo-Maratha War was concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Salbai in May 1782. Article 16 of this treaty stipulated that Mahadji Sindhia should act as 'the mutual guarantee for the perpetual and invariable adherence' by both parties to the conditions of this treaty. This left Sindhia in a much stronger and virtually independent position.

Warren Hastings valued the friendship with Mahadji Sindhia as of the highest importance to the British interest in India.¹⁵ Early in 1784, when the Mughal Emperor had become exasperated by the intrigues and counter-intrigues at his court, Prince Jawan Bakht requested Hastings to take his father into the British protection.¹⁶ But the Governor-General was unwilling to involve the Company's government in India in another war with Sindhia and, therefore, he refused to interfere in the imperial affairs which, by the treaty of 1781, had fallen under the jurisdiction of that Maratha chief.¹⁷ This friendly attitude of Hastings gave Sindhia an easy walk over the imperial affairs. In November 1784, he crushed Muhammad Beg Hamdani, the recalcitrant governor of Agra and relieved the Emperor of his difficulties. As a reward for his service, Sindhia was appointed by the Emperor the sole agent of the Peshwa to act on his behalf the Emperor's Deputy (Naib-i-Munnaib) as well as the Imperial Commander-in-Chief (Mir Bakshi). On 4 December, the Emperor conferred on Sindhia the highest possible post in the imperial government, namely, that of the Regent Plenipotentiary (Vakil-i-Mutlaq)¹⁸.

15 G.R. Gleig, Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, Vol. II, p 543.

16 Calendar of Persian correspondence, Vol VI. No. 1022 & 1042.

17 Dodwell, Warren Hastings' Letters to Sir John Macpherson, p 193.

18 J.N. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol III, pp 207-208.

The basis of Sindhia's power was his army. During the days of hostilities with English, he was favourably impressed by the performance of the latter's highly disciplined army. In 1784, Sindhia appointed De Boigne, a French military adventurer, to raise two battalions for his army. Sindhia was so well pleased with the performance of these battalions in different battles that he entrusted De Boigne with the task of reorganising his army¹⁹. By January 1790, De Boigne raised an army of seven battalions; and with the help of this 'New Model Army' Sindhia routed the Rajputs at Patan (20 June, 1790) and Merta (10 September 1790).

The increasing influence of Sindhia in the affairs of the Maratha State and the Imperial Darbar of the Delhi excited the jealousy of Nana Farnavis, the central figure of the Maratha administration. It was Nana's object to enlist to his side the support of the English as a probable counterpoise to Sindhia's increasing influence in the Maratha Confederacy and as mediator of the Treaty of Salbai, should try to monopolise the conduct of Anglo-Maratha relations at a distance of some 800 miles from Poona. Malet's real concern was 'Sindia's overgrown power and he was right in arguing that British friendship with the Marathas should not be based exclusively on partnership with him'.²⁰ At the sametime Malet tried to weaken the Maratha confederacy by keeping open the dissensions between Nana and Sindhia. When in 1792 Mahadji proceeded towards Poona with a view to making the Peshwa's authority omnipotent in all important affairs of the Maratha confederacy,²¹ Nana apprehending an evil design on the part of Sindhia, asked for military help from the British. But Malet advised Cornwallis to observe

19 H. Compton, European Military Adventurers of Hindusthan, pp 39-42.

20 S.N. Sen, Anglo-Maratha Relations, 1785-1796, p 21.

21 Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol II, pp 272, 283-284; G.S. Sardesai, New History of the Marathas, Vol III, p 233.

a strictly waiting attitude towards the Marathas. The Governor-General accordingly, dismissed Nana's request for sending military help to Poona.²² The same policy prompted Cornwallis to turn down the Proposal of Holkar²³ for British military aid against Sindhia, and this non-interfering attitude of the English in the affairs of the Marathas indirectly helped Mahadji to have a complete victory over his traditional rival at Lakheri (1793). But this battle, while deciding the Holkar-Sindhia rivalry for Hindusthan in favour of the latter, almost gave Sindhia a prominent voice in the affairs of Poona. However in 1794 Mahadji died and the management of his affairs fell in the hands of his grand-nephew, Daulatrao.²⁴ Poona affairs also took a new turn with the death of Peshwa Savai Madhavrao in October 1795. The late Peshwa had no son of his own and in the normal course of events he would have been succeeded by one of his cousins - Amritrao, Chimnaji and Bajirao. Daulatrao supported Bajirao who became the Peshwa in December 1796 after unseemly struggle for power at Poona. Sindhia's influence at Poona further increased owing to the death (1797) of Tukoji Holkar and the consequent struggle for succession among his four sons - Kashirao, Malharrao, Yashwantrao, and Vithoji. Kashirao was an imbecile and his cause was supported by Daulatrao as that would keep the House of Holkar in a position subordinate to that of the Sindhia. Malharrao's claim was supported by his other two brothers, Yashwantrao and Vithoji, and above all by Nana Farnavis. But in September 1797 Daulatrao made a sudden raid upon Malharrao's camp and killed him, while Vithoji and Yashwantrao fled to Nagpur. Nana once

22 Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol II, p 230

23 Ibid , p 268.

24 Mahadji's brother Tukoji had three sons - Kedarji, Ravloji and Annandrao. Annandrao was married to Minabai, daughter of Yesaji Angre of Kolaba. Daulatrao was born out of this wedlock. (G. S. Sardesai, Aitihāsik Gharānāncya Vamsavali, p 26).

again approached the English for help against Sindhia. Resident Malet was in favour of extending military aid to Nana to humble the growing power of Sindhia.²⁵ But Governor General Sir John Shore refused to involve the Company's government in the internal affairs of the Marathas and advised the Resident to 'leave the Poona affairs to their natural course and consequence'.²⁶ On December 31, 1797, Daulatrao had Nana and his associates arrested. Although Nana was freed in July 1798, and was allowed to act as the Peshwa's chief minister, it was Daulatrao who had become the real power at Poona.

Lord Mornington (better known as Lord Wellesley) who assumed the office of the Governor-Generalship in 1798, viewed with serious apprehension the large extent of Sindhia's dominions and the reputation of his military power from which he derived a general influence and ascendancy at Poona and over all the Maratha states. What alarmed the Governor-General most was the superb organisation of Sindhia's army a large contingent of which was under the command of the French officer, General Perron. That officer had been assigned a large tract of territory between the Jamuna and the Ganges which included the strategic forts of Agra, Delhi and Aligarh. This jahgir of Perron was regarded by Lord Wellesley as 'an independent French state on the most vulnerable part of the Company's frontier'.²⁷ In the state of international affairs then existing between England and France, Lord Wellesley viewed with alarm the growing power of the French commanders in the north-west division of India. In a letter dated June 7, 1799, to Dundas, the President of the Board of Control, Lord Wellesley wrote that for long it had been his

25 Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol II. Letters No 209, 212, 213, 215 & 217.

26 Holden Furber, Private Records of an Indian Governor-Generalship, p 89.

27 M. Martin, Wellesley Despatches, III, p 211.

ambition to destroy the French party at Sindhia's Court.²⁸ Wellesley's view was that a subsidiary alliance with the Peshwa, the constitutional head of the Maratha confederacy, would enable the British Government to exclude the French from any part of the territory held by Daulatrao or any other Maratha Chiefs.²⁹ But the presence of Daulatrao at Poona acted as an insuperable check upon the authority of the Peshwa to conclude an alliance with the English. However, in December 1800 Sindhia left Poona for Hindustan, and the pressure of inexorable forces led Bajirao to submit to British protection at Bassein. There on December 31, 1802 Bajirao concluded with the Company's government 'a treaty of perpetual and general defensive alliance'.

The conclusion of the Treaty of Bassein and the restoration of Bajirao to the Peshwaship of Poona by the English meant to Daulatrao the loss of that power and position which he and his predecessor had so long enjoyed in the affairs of Poona. He, therefore, took advantage of the nation-wide general indignation against the Treaty of Bassein and made a common cause with Raghuji Bhonsle against the English. Thus began the Second Anglo-Maratha War. Arthur Wellesley, brother of the Governor-General, captured Ahmadnagar, broke the combined forces of Sindhia and Bhonsle at Assaye in September 1803, defeated Bhonsle at Argaon in November and forced him to sign a subsidiary treaty at Deogaon on 15 December, 1803. Sindhia's army led by Perron had been defeated at Koil in August 1803, and on November 1, Lord Lake inflicted a crushing defeat upon Sindhia's remaining army at Laswari. On December 30, 1803, Sindhia had to sign a treaty of peace with the Company at Surji Anjangaon.

28 Martin, Wellesley Despatches, II, p 39.

29 Wellesley, Transactions in the Maratha Empire, pp 2-5.

He was not only deprived of a large tract of his territory, but the remaining portion was also encircled by the British territory in the south and east, and by the Rajput states in the north, Sindhia's rights and influence over the Rajput states were also diminished. The revival of Sindhia's military power was checked by the provision that he would never admit any European or American subject in his army.³⁰ Any threat to the Company's interests in India by the remaining army of Sindhia was nullified by the latter's accession to the general defensive alliance (February 27, 1804) with the Company. By it, he agreed to receive a British subsidiary force of not less than six thousands regular infantry. This force was to be stationed at such place near the frontier of Sindhia as might be deemed most eligible by the British Government.³¹

Lord Cornwallis who succeeded Lord Wellesley to the office of the Governor-General concluded with Sindhia on November 21, 1805 a definite treaty of amity and alliance with a view 'to remove all doubts and misunderstanding respecting the clear meaning and interpretation of parts of the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon'. Not only Gwalier and Gohad were restored to Sindhia, but the Government also undertook to enter into no engagements with certain tributaries of Sindhia - the Rajas of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kotah and others in Malwa and Mewar.³² To George Barlow, who succeeded Cornwallis to the management of affairs in India, the fixation of boundary at Jamuna became a fundamental principle of his administration. He added a declaratory article to the Treaty of 1805, whereby the Company's Government decided to withdraw entirely all its protection from the petty states between the Jamuna and Chambal.³³

30 For a full text of the treaty, vide C.U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads etc. Vol IV, pp 39-45

31 Ibid pp 46-47

32 Ibid, pp 56-59

33 Ibid, pp 60-61

The direct result of the Cornwallis - Barlow policy of limiting the western boundary of the Company's territories in India to the east of the Jamuna, was that the Maratha states were left with their independence and their tributary rights over the petty states in Central India and Rajputana. To Earl Moira (later made Lord Hastings), who assumed the Governor-Generalship in October 1813, the independent status of the Maratha states, was, however, very irksome. His object was to make the Company's Government the paramount power in India.³⁴ This necessarily involved the breaking-up of the Maratha confederacy as well as their independence and roping the petty states in Central India and Rajputana within the pale of British protection.

Of the three independent Maratha Chiefs, Raghuji Bhonsle was the weakest. After his sad experience of war in 1803, he continued to maintain an attitude of sullen indifference to all political concerns of the Maratha confederacy, confining his attention only to the protection of his territory at Nagpur. He was fully aware of his own military weakness and never entertained an idea of involving himself in a war with the English. After his demise in March, 1816, his nephew Appa Saheb concluded a subsidiary treaty with the British with a view to secure his position as the Regent of Raghuji's imbecile son, Parsoji.³⁵

Yashwantrao Holkar's death in 1811 had left the Government of his state to the unscrupulous adventurer, Amir Khan. Besides, the Government had been suffering from serious financial distress and the matter was still made worse by the dissensions between the two widows of Yashwantrao, Mina Bai and Tulsi Bai.³⁶ While Tulsi Bai, as the Regent of the Holkar State, had been making overtures to the Company's Government for a closer alliance

34 Lord Hastings, Private Journal, II, pp 54-55.

35 Sardesai, New History of the Marathas, III, p 474.

36 Grant Duff, II, pp 399-401.

in order to free herself from the thralldom of Amir Khan,³⁷ the Pathan leader was applying for a jahgir under the British.³⁸ The state was, thus, too disunited to aim at any studied opposition to the Company's Government. Moira himself admitted that the condition of the Holkar's State made it 'neither useful in alliance nor formidable in hostility'.³⁹

... It was Daulatrao Sindhia who engaged the unremitting attention of Moira since the latter came to India. The Sindhian chief was considered as the most powerful representative of the Maratha nation. He had a large army, and his resources were greater than those of the other two Maratha chiefs. But his state also was torn by internal dissensions. The Treaty of 1805, though it granted personally to Sindhia a pension of four lacs a year, deprived his chiefs of their annual pensions payable by the Company's Government under the provision of the Treaty of 1803. It was impossible for Sindhia's government to raise a revenue commensurate with his expenditure from his territories wasted and depopulated by the recent wars. The revenues which had been formally anticipated at one crore and a half of Rupees, had now dwindled down to only seventy lacs and his ministers anticipated a further decrease.⁴⁰ The matter was still made worse by the problem of Sindhia's army. Although it had been reduced in numbers by recent wars with the English, the remaining troops were of the worst description, always in a state of mutiny for arrears of pay, and had degenerated into a lawless horde of plunderers, who, in the realisation of their demands, did not hesitate to pillage the territories even of their own masters.⁴¹ Sindhia was, therefore,

37 For. Sec. Cons. 16 May 1815, No. 123.

38 For. Sec. Cons. 2 May 1815, No. 15.

39 Secret Letter to Court, 11 August 1815.

40 Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol XI, Letter No. 242.

41 Ibid, XIV, No. 23, 31 & 34.

obliged to send them out to subsist upon the districts restored to him by the treaty of 1805⁴². Under the circumstances, Sindhia was evidently aware of the danger of provoking the resentment of the Company's Government, and in all probability never entertained any idea of exposing himself to its irresistible fury. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, his attitude could not be considered as hostile to the British⁴³. It is true that Moira's decision to take under British protection the principality of Bhopal over which Sindhia had a long-standing claim⁴⁴, aroused great indignation in the mind of the Maharaja. But he was unwilling to proceed to the extremities of war with the English over the question and quietly withdrew his troops from Bhopal. Nor did Sindhia think seriously of forming a general confederacy of the Marathas for the purpose of resisting the British advance either in Bhopal or in other parts of India. Captain

⁴² Grant Duff, op. cit. Vol. II, pp 401 - 402

⁴³ H.T. Prinsep, Political and Military Transactions, Vol. I, p 27 .

⁴⁴ Malcolm (Memoir, I, p 387) refers to an "implied connection" between the house of Sindhia and the principality of Bhopal since the time of Mahadji Sindhia. This was further strengthened by Daulatrao's appeal to Article 8 of the treaty of 1805 which specifically allowed him to count the ancient and autonomous ruling houses of Mewar, Marwar and other chiefs in Malwa among his tributaries to the exclusion of British interference in their affairs. In 1813 the troops of Sindhia and Bhonsle had invaded Bhopal for the failure of Ghous Mohammed, Nawab of Bhopal, to pay the two Maratha Chiefs the money promised by him for support against the Dewan, Vazir Mohammed. Moira saw in this affair a possibility of the formation of a Maratha confederacy under Sindhia's leadership, and 'a wide conspiracy' for the expulsion of the British from India (Lord Hastings, Summary of the Administration, etc. pp 16-17 & 38-39) . In a conference on 29 November 1814, Sindhia's ministers referred to the Article 8 of the Treaty of 1805 as confirming the Maharaja in his tributary rights over Bhopal. (For. Sec. Cons. 20 December 1814 No. 34). But Malcolm (Political History, I, p 449) denied Sindhia's claim of suzerainty over Bhopal and Moira interpreted 8th Article of the Treaty of 1805 in favour of the British by arguing that Bhopal had not been mentioned in the said treaty.

Close, the Resident at Sindhia's Court, reported, "Sindhia, however desirous he has always shown himself to bring about a reunion of the Marhattas, seems never to have thought of forming a general confederacy⁴⁵ out of all the neighbouring states". Even if the three Maratha Chiefs - Bhonsle, Holkar and Sindhia - could combine their forces against the British, Moira was confident that they had not much chance of success. He said, "Our means are ample against any combination."⁴⁶

It was not so much Sindhia's actions as his independent position that made him appear to Moira to be the chief obstacle to the establishment of British paramountcy in India. What seemed more galling to the Governor-General was the Article 8 of the Treaty of 1805 with Sindhia whereby the Company's Government was bound not to enter into any treaty relations with the Maharaja's tributaries in Central India and Rajputana. Moira was very keen on bringing under British protection the Rajput States whom he called our "Natural allies and the natural enemies of the Marathas."⁴⁸ By establishing its influence over the Rajput States, the Company could increase its military resources and gain a valuable strategic advantage against the Marathas. Hence, Moira was bent on liberating the Company's Government from the restrictive clause of the Treaty of 1805.

But neither the Governor-General's Council nor the controlling authority in England was willing to sanction any wholesale revision of the existing alliances with the Indian States. On one point, however, they

⁴⁵ For. Sec. Cons. 11 June 1816, No. 29

⁴⁶ For. Sec. Cons. 20 April 1816 No. 1

⁴⁷ M. S. Mehta, Lord Hastings and the Indian States, p 27

⁴⁸ For. Sec. Cons. 15 June 1816, No. 5

all agreed with Moira. It was the urgent need of suppressing the freebooters known as the Pindaris⁴⁹ who had established themselves chiefly in Central India and who often plundered the territories of the Company and its allies. Moira held that a complete eradication of the Pindari menace would not be possible without a revision of the relations subsisting between the East India Company and the Indian States, particularly Sindhia whom he called "the most powerful and the most decided supporter of the Pindaris".⁵⁰ In a Note⁵¹ sent to Sindhia in September 1817, Moira argued that the existing treaties between the Maharaja and the Company's Government had been virtually dissolved on account of the former's failure to take measures against the Pindaris who, having taken shelter in his territory, had repeatedly invaded the territories of the Company and its allies. As the Company's Government had now taken upon itself the task of eradicating the Pindari menace, Sindhia should not only co-operate with the British in the military operations against the Pindaris, but also relieve the Company's Government from the Article 8 of the Treaty of 1805 so that effective arrangements could be made with his tributaries in Rajputana for preventing the return of the Pindaris and the revival of the predatory system in any form. A treaty framed on this basis was dictated to Sindhia and he accepted it.

By the Treaty of Gwalior (5 November 1817) Sindhia agreed to

49 The Pindaris were the large bodies of irregular horsemen, served any chief without pay, on condition of being permitted to compensate themselves by plundering the enemies. In the eighteenth century, they had established themselves chiefly in Central India, taking the designations of ' Sindesahi ' and ' Holkarsahi ' Pindaris, according as they adhered to one or the other of the Maratha chiefs.- Origin of the Pindaris, etc. by an Officer of the East India Company (London 1818) pp 94-95

50 Letter to Court, 1st March 1820

51 For. Sec. Cons. 28 October 1817, No 5.

provide a contingent of 5,000 of his best herseman, to be employed under the direction of British Officers against the Pindaris. In order to pay the men of the Contingent regularly, Sindhia agreed to relinquish for a period of three years the stipends paid by the Company's Government to himself and his ministers, and also the tribute from the Rajput States. These funds were to be disbursed directly by the British officers attached to each division of the Contingent. The remaining principal divisions of Sindhia's regular army should be stationed in fixed positions whence they were not to move without the consent of the Company's Government; British officers were to be stationed at the headquarters of each of these divisions for the purpose of watching over a strict observance of the Article. Sindhia also released the Company's Government from the restriction imposed upon it by Article 8 of the treaty of 1805, and the latter was left at liberty to form engagements with the states of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Bundi and other states on the left bank of the Chambal.⁵²

The object of the Treaty of 1817, as Moira said, was not to seek immediately any permanent alliance with Sindhia, but to make some temporary arrangements for the suppression of the Pindaris.⁵³ The Governor-General, however, held that a closer and permanent alliance between the Company's Government and Sindhia would tend more than any single measure to ensure the tranquillity of India. In fact, Moira desired to graft at a future period "a treaty of general defensive alliance" on the arrangements made by the Treaty of 1817.⁵⁴ What prevented him from making an immediate offer for a permanent alliance to Sindhia was the prohibitory order of the controlling authority in England. Canning, who in 1816 had been appointed the President

52 Aitchison, op.cit, Vol IV, pp. 247-249

53 For. Sec. Cons. 28 October 1817, No. 4

54 Ibid .

the President of the Board of Control, warned Moira that the Company's political system was not to be extended further or made more permanent than may be necessary for the object of crushing the Pindaris⁵⁵. Moira himself did not think it expedient to make immediately a direct proposition to Sindhia for a defensive alliance as that would have tended to excite his suspicions and fears. It was by giving Sindhia confidence in the credibility of British friendship that the Governor-General planned to lead him to seek a closer connexion with the Company's Government in future.⁵⁶ Moira offered British help to Sindhia for establishing in his state a regular government. The Governor-General pointed out to Sindhia that the greatest evil lay in the disregard which his officers and chief usually showed to their sovereign's orders. The Governor-General also expressed his apprehension that these chiefs and officers might take under their protection the Pindaris whom the Company's Government planned to suppress. Hence, Moira proposed to Sindhia that during the operations against the Pindaris an adequate British force should be stationed near the Maharaja's person for the purpose of buttressing his authority and subjugating his refractory chiefs and officers. In consonance with the policy of the controlling authority in England, Moira assured Sindhia that no interference with his government was sought by this arrangement beyond what the Maharaja might desire for the establishment of his legitimate authority.⁵⁷ This arrangement was included in the Draft Treaty of 1817.⁵⁸

Sindhia, however, expressed his reluctance to entertain a British force near his person and, therefore, the Article relating to this arrangement

55 Quoted by C.H. Philips, The East India Company, 1784-1834, p 218

56 For. Sec. Cons. 28 October 1817, No. 4.

57 For. Sec. Cons. 28 October 1817, No. 5.

58 For. Sec. Cons. 28 October 1817, No. 7.

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was omitted in the final treaty. But the effect of his adherence to the other terms of the Treaty of 1817 resulted in such a diminution of his political, military and financial power as to lead by natural gradations to his reposing himself on the Company's Government as his only support against a refractory army and disaffected subjects. By the clause relating to the formation of the Contigent, the most efficient part of Sindhia's troops was detached from his army and formed into a Contingent. It was subject to British requisition and direction. This left Sindhia with the worst of troops, and paying them regularly was a problem for him. For, by alienating the Rajpur revenues, and the British pensions paid to him, some of his family members and chiefs for the purpose of paying the troops of the Contingent regularly, the Treaty of 1817 put Sindhia in great financial distress. A large portion of the revenues from his territories did not reach his treasury because of the prevalent system of farming revenues. Thus, the Treaty of 1817 made arrangements for the regular payments of the troops of the Contingent, but it did not make any provision for the payment or discipline of the remainder of Sindhia's troops. Confronted with his unruly and unpaid soldiery, Sindhia found no other alternative than to seek the help of the Company's Government. This provided Moira with an opportunity to keep the Contingent with its British officers within Sindhia's territories on a permanent footing. It enabled the Company's Government to tighten its stranglehold upon Sindhia's Government, which though still technically independent, became as much subject to British influence as were those Indian States having subsidiary treaty relations with the Company's Government.

CHAPTER II

EXTENSION OF BRITISH INFLUENCE

After the Pindari war was over, the question arose as to what should be done with the Gwalior Contingent. It had been formed for the ostensible purpose of suppressing the Pindaris. As that object had been accomplished, it was expected that the Contingent would be disbanded. During an interview with Atmaram, Sindhia's yakil, acting-Resident Stewart remarked that the Sindhia's Government had failed to bring forward in time the Contingent to be of any use in aiding the British Government in its operations against the Pindaris. Therefore, if it did continue to act with the British troops for a few months more after those freebooters had been destroyed, that could not even compensate for the actual infringement of the Treaty of 1817 in not bringing it forward in due season.¹ To the Governor-General the acting Resident expressed his view that the Sindhia's Contingent should not only kept up, but that it should act along with the British troops for sometime. But Sindhia's ministers, particularly Ramchandra Ana and Bapu Chitnis, were opposed to the continuance of the Contingent; firstly because the funds appropriated for its maintenance were partly composed of the pensions paid to them, and secondly because those funds did not pass through their hands but went directly to the troops from the Resident by which mode their influence was in some measure diminished. However, Sindhia himself was not averse to the continuance of the Contingent, for he was in great financial distress and was not in a position to pay 2,000 of his horsemen which formed part of the Contingent. He was therefore anxious to allow the horsemen to remain in the Contingent where their pay was secured. For this very reason the Maharaja was desirous of replacing the British levies of 1000 men of the

1 For. Sec. Cons. 15 May 1818 No. 63.

Contingent by the same number of his troops clamouring for their pay.²

Though Sindhia did not express any impatience to have the stipulations regarding the Contingent abrogated, he expected it to employ to reap the benefits adverted to in the 10th article of the Treaty of 1817 viz. in the event of success against the Pindaris or other freebooters by the joint operations by Sindhia and the British Government, the latter would make the most liberal arrangements for the consolidation and increase of the Maharaja's territories. Governor-General Hastings objected to the employment of the Contingent with the British troops on a service different from that for which it was expressly brought forward. He, however, assented to the Contingent being stationed within Sindhia's territories where its services would be most useful in preventing the revival of the Pindari incursion.³ To this Sindhia agreed. Encouraged by Sindhia's reduced strength by his accession to the terms of the treaty of 1817, some of his prominent Chiefs and tributaries tried to defy the orders of their sovereign. Sindhia found it very hard to suppress them as his army too was in a state of mutiny. Under the circumstances, he welcomed the British proposal of employing the Contingent in restoring order within his territories. Raja Jaising of Raghugarh, who had inherited from his predecessors the hostility towards Sindhia, had been dispossessed by Daulatrao of his patrimony. Jaising, at the head of a resolute troop of followers, laid waste the adjacent country and occupied for five years a large part of Sindhia's force. Ajitsing and Dhokulsing, the successor of Jaising though divided among themselves, continued the contest with varying fortunes. Dhokulsing proved to be the worst enemy of Sindhia. He and his followers were given shelter and encouragement from Mirkhan's authorities in the district of Chapra. Capt. Fielding, with one British detachment

2 For. Pol. Cons. 8 April 1819 No. 48 para 25.

3 For. Sec. Cons. 29 May 1818 No. 8 para 25.

of the Contingent, pursued him; but in the extensive jungles of Kichiwara it was very difficult to come up with the followers of Dhokulsing. A negotiation ensued through the agency of Capt. Blacker under the direction of the Resident, but without success. The Resident then authorised the Contingent to act against Dhokulsing, who was defeated and compelled to fly. A compromise was made with other branches of the family of Jaising.⁴ Garhkota proved to be another field of success for the Contingent. It was part of the cession made by Raja Chhatrasal Bundela to Peshwa Bajirao I. It was held from the Peshwa's government by Pritsing, an illegitimate son of Chhatrasal. Pritsing's grandson, Mardansing practically made himself independent of the Maratha supremacy, though Sindhia for sometime recovered something by way of tribute. Mardansing chose to assist Amirkhan in his raids on the Nagpur territory and lost his life in the skirmishes with the British troops. Most of his territories were conquered by Sindhia and the rest were occupied by Takhtasing and Arjunsing, the sons of Mardansing. Arjunsing started hostilities with Sindhia, recovered his father's territories, and even raided Sindhia's territories. Unable to suppress him, Daulatrao appealed to the British for help and Brigadier-General Watson recovered Garh-Kota for Sindhia.⁵

Thus the Contingent proved very useful in maintaining the peace of Sindhia's state and upholding his authority. Hence, Sindhia was willing to continue the Contingent. But the problem was how to provide funds for the Contingent, the existing funds being already exhausted. Article 5 of the Treaty of 1817 had stipulated that Daulatrao Sindhia would renounce for three year (1818-1821) the stipends paid by the British Government to him, his family members and ministers. The Maharaja had also agreed to relinquish

4 For. Pol. Cons. 25 Nov. 1820, No. 53.

5 Malcolm, Memoir, Vol I, pp 484 & 486.

to the British Government for a period of two years the tribute to which he was entitled to receive from the Rajput states of Jodhpur, Bundi and Kota. The funds available from all these sources amounted to Rs. 24,10,854, while the annual expenditure of the Contingent was Rs. 19,68,000.⁶ Thus, the funds available under Article 5 were not sufficient to continue the Contingent for two years. Acting-Resident Stewart pointed out to Atmaram that the Contingent had of late been entirely engaged in Sindhia's service, and it might continue to be very usefully employed in the different parts of the Maharaja's dominions, provided the Maharaja would appropriate funds for its maintenance. Sindhia told Stewart that the latter was so fully acquainted with the state of his affairs that he wished to leave it to the Acting-Resident to devise the best mode of raising the funds for the Contingent. Since the conclusion of the Second Maratha War, Sindhia's Government had been facing a serious financial crisis. The gross revenue of Sindhia's dominions was about a crore and fifty lacs of rupees. After deducting jahgirs and the expense of management the amount appeared to be nearly one crore, exclusive of what was paid by the British Government and the tribute of the Rajput States. Such, however, was the general mismanagement of revenues that the Maharaja could not actually realize more than 73 lacs per annum from the whole of his territories.⁷ The causes of this great deficiency in the revenues were, firstly, the system of raising loans for the state exchequer in anticipation of the resources of the country. This was known as the soucari system of finance. The general arrangement of the loans raised in anticipation of the revenue, were made with Gokul Parekh, who acted as Sindhia's banker. He received the orders of Government on the different amildars, and distributed them to the different soucars in the capital, according to their

6 C.I.A.R. File No. 32, pp 163 - 170.

7 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5, para 5.

respective shares of the loan. These soucars again transferred those orders to their counterparts in the principal towns throughout the country, such as Ujjain, Mandasore etc. From there the orders were again transferred to the petty soucars in every pargana and almost in every village, who realized the amount from the ryots as the crops were reaped. This widely extended ramifications of the soucari system of finance burdened Sindhia's Government with debts. Secondly, there was the system of farming the revenues, which would leave the ryots at the mercy of an amildar who had no permanent interest in the prosperity of the country. He only looked to make maximum profit from the land during the short period he held his situation. Thirdly, the system of granting jahgirs to chiefs and favourites was another reason for the deficiency in the revenues of the state. Many of these jahgir were found to be in a more flourishing condition than the rest of the country; but their prosperity was at the expense of the surrounding districts belonging to the Government, from where the inhabitants were induced to fly to the places where they were better protected by the jahgirdars. Last but not least, there was the general inefficiency of the Government, which could not afford protection to the ryots against any petty chief who chose to levy contributions upon them. Now, the total expenditure of the state, including the pay of the regular battalions, was about 70 lacs. But the whole revenue of the year 1819 had been anticipated. Therefore, it was necessary to raise the amount of 70 lacs for the current expenditure of the present year, i.e., 1818, by assignments on next year's revenues of the country. Besides, there were arrears due to the troops to the amount of 40 lacs.⁸ But the soucars were unwilling to risk their money in loan to Sindhia's Government. The sudden change in the existing relations between the British and the Maharaja brought

8 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5, para 10.

about by the Pindari war, tended to increase the fears of the money lenders and their doubts of the ultimate designs of the British Government. Moreover, Gokul Parekh, with whom the general arrangement of the loans were made, had some quarrel with Sindhia and left the capital.⁹ Under the circumstances, Sindhia was at a loss where to get the money. He made frequent communications to the Resident through Atmaram Pandit regarding the general situation of his affairs and the difficulties and embarrassments with which he was encompassed. Early in January 1819, he retired to Gohad to avoid the importunities of his troops and to pass away the time until it was seen that Gokul Parekh returned to Gwalior. As desired by the Maharaja, the Resident had accompanied him to Gohad; and Sindhia anxiously solicited from him some pecuniary aid to relieve him from his present embarrassments.¹⁰

To what extent the miserable condition of his financial state of affairs, had reduced Sindhia, can be easily understood from an incident. On December 5, 1819, acting-Resident Stewart had been invited by the Maharaja to see an exhibition of fireworks, when the amusements of the evening were interrupted by the appearance in the durbar of two officers lately attached to the brigades of Jean Baptiste. One was a Swede by birth, named Leverette, and the other, M. Pedron 'a half-caste Frenchman'. These two officers had, previously to their appearance in the durbar, applied to the acting-Resident to obtain the adjustment of their accounts with Sindhia's Government; but the British agent did not think it to be a proper case for him to interfere and, therefore, he declined to comply with their request. But on the day, the exhibition of fireworks was held, Leverette

9 S.I.S., Vol IV, Letter No. 118, p 174.

10 For. Sec. Cons. 8 April 1819, No. 48, para 3.

and Pedron contrived to pass the sentries and doorkeepers of the Durbar by pretending to belong to the Residency, and thus having obtained admission they immediately demanded their arrears of pay. Leverette even stepped upto the Maharaja and tendered his sword to him desiring that he would take his life with it, or do him justice. Sindhia appeared much ashamed and gave directions to his ministers to enquire into and settle the accounts of the two officers, but Leverette insisted on an immediate settlement and gave rather a ludicrous account of the manner on which he had already been referred from one minister to another.¹¹ He was then told that his accounts would now be settled, and Hindurao put an end to the discussion by sending a person to hand the two officers out of the durbar which was effected without any violence.

Resident Stewart suggested two modes by which Sindhia might be relieved from his financial distress. As the soucars had been unwilling to risk their money in loan to Sindhia in apprehension of a rupture between the Maharaja and the British Government, the Resident suggested that if a pledge of security were given to the soucars by the British Government that the assignments given to them on account of the advances of cash should be inviolable, they would readily continue to supply the wants of Sindhia's Government in the mode in which they had hitherto been accustomed to do.¹² The Resident, however, remarked that a temporary relief of this kind unaccompanied by any change in the wretched system of finance or any reform in the administration of the country would be of little avail towards the settlement of Sindhia's affairs. The Resident, therefore, suggested another plan of relieving Sindhia's Government from its distresses. The British Government should raise a loan for Sindhia, while the Maharaja would

11 For. Pol. Cons. 22 January 1820, No. 72.

12 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5, para 13.



appropriate funds for the regular discharge of the interest and also set apart a portion of his territories or the gradual liquidation of the debt itself. For example, Sindhia required a crore and ten lacs of rupees to pay up the arrears of his troops, and to meet the expenses of the current year. This amount was to be borrowed under the guarantee of the British Government. The pensions payable annually to Sindhia by the British might be appropriated to the payment of interest of this debt, and Sindhia would assign territories to the British Government for the liquidation of the principal. The territories which were probably of the least value to Sindhia, but which were most desirable for the British Government, such as Sindhia's possessions in Khandesh which intermixed with and contiguous to the British territories, and also Garh-kota, might be set apart for this purpose.¹³ The Resident pointed out the advantages of such a plan to Sindhia. It would enable him at once to shake off the controlling influence of the shróffs who were enriched equally at the expense of the state and of the troops. It would also enable him to pay off the arrears of his troops, to disband such as he did not require, and to pay the remainder regularly thus enabling him to obtain such a control over them as would make them useful and efficient in maintaining the tranquillity of the country. The advantages of the plan for relieving the financial distress of Sindhia as suggested by him, the Resident added, were equally certain for the British Government. The maintenance of peace and good order in the dominions of Sindhia was of itself an object of importance to the British Government and therefore, the controlling influence which the command of his supplies would give the British authorities in India over Sindhia's conduct and councils might be used for the salutary purpose of establishing a system of Government in his

13 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5, para 16.

dominions which would bring them to harmonize in peace and prosperity¹⁴ with the other states of India.

Governor-General Lord Hastings admitted the propriety of the Resident's proposition for assisting Sindhia with a loan in order to render him independent of the shroffs and soucars to whom he was indebted, that he might thereby be enabled to discharge the arrears due to his troops, to enter on a radical reform of his establishments, and to improve the general system of his Government with British aid and advice. Considering, however, the effects it would have on the British credit and on the future means of resorting to the market in case of necessity for the Company, and on the interest of the local commercial community, the Governor-General rejected the Resident's plan to advance a direct loan for the benefit of Sindhia. On the same considerations, the Governor-General thought it wise to avoid giving British guarantee to a loan to be raised by Sindhia in his own dominions. Instead, the Governor-General suggested an alternative arrangement: the debt incurred by Sindhia to the shroffs and soucars in anticipation of the revenues of the ensuing year to be taken up by the British Government which would become responsible to the creditors for the payment of the principal and interest; Sindhia to be released from all obligations to the creditors and the existing assignments of his revenues to be annulled. The Maharaja, on his part, would assign other lands to the British Government and secure it against any loss on account of the debt it would thus incur to the present creditors of Sindhia. The lands concerned were to be selected according to the mutual convenience of the two states; and they were to remain in the hands of the British Government until the account was settled and to be administered entirely by the officers of the British Government without any interference on the part of

14 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5; para 18.

the Maharaja. If the lands thus assigned were found to be insufficient, the whole or such portion of the stipends payable to Sindhia by the British Government and the tribute paid by the Rajputs might be applied to the same purpose.¹⁵ This arrangement, the Governor-General remarked, appeared to embrace all the objects desired by a direct loan while avoiding the necessity of actually borrowing in the market more than a limited sum: it would at once free Sindhia from all encumbrances on his revenues and give him the means of settling the arrears of his troops and gradually discharging such as he did not require permanently to retain in his service. He should thus be able to commence without delay on the reform of his administration and especially to supersede the oppressive system of farming the revenues by the employment of officers of the government in making the settlement and collections even of the current year. On the other hand, the creditors would be secured against all contingencies of war between Sindhia and the British, or the failure from any other cause of Sindhia's fulfilment of his engagements.¹⁶ The Resident had pointed out that the great obstacle to the progress of the reform in Sindhia's Government was the want of a minister of ability, experience and comprehensive view. The Maharaja, however, attended much more to the concerns of his state than he had formerly done. The Resident remarked "In as far as good intentions and a sincere wish to improve the state of his country and Government goes, there is no one better suited than Sindhia himself for the management of his affairs. Even in regard to good sense and sound understanding I am not aware of any of his courtiers surpassing him".¹⁷ But Sindhia was deficient in that resolution and energy of mind - qualities required to correct the deep-rooted abuses. To remedy this defect in his

15 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 6 para 10.

16 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 6, para 12.

17 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 5, para 23.

character, the Resident suggested that the aid to be given by the British Government might be made conditional of the Maharaja actually carrying into effect such a reformation of the whole system of his Government as would ensure the future peace and prosperity of the country. The Governor-General accepted this suggestion of the Resident and expressed a hope that the foundation of such a degree of reform might soon be laid in a reduced and improved military establishment and the abolition of the farming system combined with a vigilant and active control over the revenue officers of the government by the proposed assignment to the British Government of the Maharaja's distant possessions in the Deccan. In this connection, the Governor-General mentioned that the whole of Sindhia's territories south of the river Narmada would be most convenient for the British Government to occupy as security for the reimbursement of its payments of Sindhia's creditors.¹⁸

Despite his determination to streamline the whole administration of his government, Sindhia was unwilling to relinquish his possessions in the Deccan, Khandesh and Garh-Kota. The ostensible reason behind Sindhia's refusal was that the territories in the Deccan were the ancestral possessions of his family. Moreover, Sindhia referred to an incident which rendered him in some degree averse to the cession of his territory to the British. During the war between the British and the Peshwa and the Bhonsle, some people had advised Sindhia to make common cause with the latter. These people had told Sindhia that whether the latter opposed the British or not, the same fate which befell the Peshwa or the Bhonsle, would also ultimately envelope him. Although the events of 1817 did not interfere with his independence, Sindhia was afraid that if now any part of his dominions was transferred to

18 For. Sec. Cons. 21 November 1818, No. 6, para 15.

to the British, those people would interpret it as the commencement of the fulfilment of their prophecies, and would reproach him with the conduct he had pursued during the war between the Peshwa and the Bhonsle, and the British. When the Resident told him that he ought not to allow the remarks of the ignorant to influence his conduct in a matter where the welfare of his dominions were concerned, the Maharaja observed allegorically that "the wound of a sword might be healed and a man might afterwards feel no inconvenience from it, but the wounds inflicted by the tongue could never be cured." 19.

Acting-Resident Stewart informed Atmaram that the means of raising funds both for the payment of the Contingent and for relieving the Maharaja from his present financial embarrassments might be discovered, provided the scruples of the Maharaja with respect to the transfer to the British Government of some portion of his territories in the Deccan, Khandesh and Garh-Kota could be got over. Otherwise, it would be extremely difficult, if not impracticable to make any satisfactory arrangement. Stewart proposed that the whole arrangements to be entered into with Sindhia's Government should be reduced to a short written engagement. It stipulated that the aid of the British Government should be granted to Daulatrao Sindhia, to enable him to pay up the arrears of his troops, and to discharge those that were superfluous, to restore the prosperity of his country by improving the revenue system and abolishing the ruinous plan of anticipating the revenues, to introduce order and regularity into the system of his finances, and lastly, to establish his authority and control throughout his dominions. For these purposes pecuniary advances to a certain extent would be made by the British Government, or under its guarantee. The Maharaja would keep up 300 of his best horse in an efficient state under

the superintendence of British officers to be employed generally in preserving the tranquillity of Sindhia's dominions and in reducing to obedience any refractory zamindars or tributaries. They might also be employed when required in concert with the British troops for objects connected with the mutual benefit of both states. The Maharaja in return for the British aid, would transfer to the British Government for the liquidation of the debt and the payment of the contingent his possessions in the Deccan, Khandesh and Garh-Kota.²⁰ However, early in 1820, Gokul Parekh returned to Gwalior, and Sindhia threw himself almost entirely into the hands of his minister, to whom the distresses of the Government were a source of advantage and who was, therefore, averse to any plan which would put finances of the state in a better condition. Thus, the plan proposed by the acting Resident for the reform of Sindhia's Government through the aid of the British Government had to be given up. The written agreement which was made between the two Government on February 6, 1820, only related to the funds to be provided for the maintenance of the Contingent. The agreement said that the funds appropriated for the purpose of maintaining the Contingent, the pensions paid to Sindhia and certain other persons of his court, and the tribute to which the Maharaja was entitled from Jodhpur and Kota for three years, had already been exhausted and a considerable balance remained due to the British Government. The body of auxiliary horse to be maintained by Sindhia should therefore, be reduced to such an extent that the funds originally appropriated for the maintenance of the Contingent might be fully adequate. It was further agreed that for the liquidation of the debt incurred by Sindhia to the British Government for the payments already made to the auxiliary horse, as well as for the expenses of these horse until the funds appropriated

20 For. Sec. Cons. 8 April 1819, No. 48, para 29.

for their maintenance became available, the parganas of Yawal, Choprah, Pachorah and 12 villages in Lohara in Khandesh and the possessions in Garh-Kota and Maltown intermixed with those of the British Government together with the fort of Garh-Kota be handed over to the British Government by Sindhia.²¹ The number of auxiliary troops were reduced to 2000 men, of them 1800 being Sindhia's troops and the remaining 200 were raised under the Governor-General's authority by Capt. Blacker and Capt. Fielding.

The question remained to be decided whether the Contingent with its part of British levies could be employed in settling the domestic disputes of Sindhia and whether, in such cases, British troops could be called into to assist the Contingent. Early in 1818, disturbances had broken out among Sindhia's troops in Ahirwara. This district formed part of Col. Baptiste's jahgirs. The troops under Baptiste had long been accustomed to levy what they pleased from Ahirwara and the adjoining districts. It was the wish of Sindhia to put an end to such a system and to disband a great part of those troops thereby weakening the increasing influence and authority of Baptiste. Article 6 of the Treaty of 1817 had stipulated that Sindhia's principal divisions should be stationed in fixed positions whence they were not to move without the consent of the British officers appointed to reside with them. Accordingly, Major Bunce had been directed to proceed to the headquarters of Baptiste at Bahadurgarh. Baptiste, however, quitted Bahadurgarh before Bunce's arrival and proceeded to Gwalior. The object of this movement was not known, but Sindhia took advantage of it to supersede the authority of Baptiste. His jahgirs were resumed by the Maharaja and a principal part of his troops were placed under the command of Major Aratoon, one of Sindhia's commanders. But Aratoon taking advantage of the agitation

21 Aitchison, Vol V, pp 413-414.

of the troops at Ahirwara for their arrears, assumed an independent position and began to levy tributes from the region. Sindhia then appointed Baba Patankar, Governor of the districts of Ahirwara, Kichiwara and Chanderi and directed him to pay the troops stationed in those districts a part of their arrears and to come to some settlement with them. But Patankar was afraid to trust his person among the mutinous soldiers and, therefore, Atmaram requested acting Resident Stewart to allow the two corps of the contingent under Capt. Blacker and Capt. Fielding to move along with Patankar to give him that weight and influence which would enable him to come to some arrangement with them. Accordingly, the acting-Resident directed Capt. Blacker and Capt. Fielding to move in support of Baba Patankar. By October 1818, the rebellious battalions had been brought into some degree of order and Sindhia's Government was candid enough to ascribe this success in a great measure to the movement of the Contingent.²²

Towards the end of 1819, however, disturbances were once again raised in Ahirwara by the battalions under Jose Alexander. Sindhia was determined to put an end to this recurring disturbances and sent Col. Jacob with two battalions and twenty-two guns to Kolaras from where, reinforced by several other corps, he would proceed against the mutineers. Sindhia also requested acting-Resident Stewart to direct the Contingent to co-operate with the force under Col. Jacob. The Maharaja assured the acting-Resident that he had no intention whatever to deprive those mutinous battalions of what was justly due to them and that Col. Jacob had been fully authorized to pay them up to the date on which they had broken out into open rebellion, and after that they would be dismissed. This seemed to the acting-Resident to be an equitable settlement and, therefore, he directed Lt. Johnson, the British officer superintending

the Contingent, to require of Jose Alexander to put an end to the disturbance of the country by accepting what seemed to be fair terms. Jose Alexander, however, informed Lt. Johnson that there had been many negotiations between him and Sindhia's Government but without any effect, and as he considered the Maharaja and his chiefs as deceivers, the present negotiation held through the British agents was bound to fail. When the acting Resident informed Sindhia that as there were many negotiations between the Maharaja and the mutinous battalions, he considered his interference or mediation to be no longer required and, therefore, he begged leave to give up an unsatisfactory negotiation which he had from the first reluctantly undertaken. Sindhia sent Atmaram to Stewart with the most solemn assurances on his part that he had written no letter to Jose Alexander as alleged by the latter, nor indeed any letter whatever since the negotiation had been carried on through the British agents. The Maharaja, therefore, begged the acting-Resident to continue his good offices in effecting some settlement with the mutinous corps. The acting-Resident desired to leave the Maharaja to arrange matters with his mutinous troops as best as he could. But in the delicate situation in which the British Government were placed with Sindhia's Government having a large body of their horsemen under the superintendence of British officers it was difficult to avoid acting as umpires in any affairs on which the Contingent might be employed. Besides, Sindhia with a degree of confidence had directed Col. Jacob with the battalions under his command to be guided entirely by such instructions as he might receive from the British officer superintending the Contingent and the Colonel had professed his readiness to adhere to such instructions. This put the acting-Resident in an embarrassing situation, and he proposed that the settlement of the arrears should be made by Col. Jacob and that the British agents should merely act as umpires in the decision of any disputed point.²³

23 For. Pol. Cons. 22 April 1820, No. 41.

It seemed, however, that no plan would be agreed to by the mutinous battalions which stipulated for their dismissal, while they continued so nearly a match for the force sent against them. Therefore Sindhia enquired of the acting-Resident, whether in the event of his own troops being inadequate to bring the mutineers into subjection, the British Government would help him with its infantry and artillery troops for the purpose. Lord Hastings' policy was to encourage Sindhia to take measures for the reformation of his Government and country and to enmesh him with a firm grip by providing British assistance for that purpose. The Governor-General's view was that the system already established by him for preventing the revival of predatory habits and practices would not be complete until some regular government was established in Sindhia's country. The acting-Resident was, therefore, advised by the Governor-General to take every step to encourage Sindhia's reliance on the British Government and for that reason to give him the aid of the British troops stationed in Bundelkhand or Saugor should Sindhia require it.²⁴ When, however, Sindhia sought the support of the British troops in reducing his disobedient troops at Ahiwara the acting-Resident expressed his unwillingness to move the British troops particularly in the hot summer without the express authority of the Governor-General. It would only be in the extreme cases of the mutinous battalions refusing altogether to be disbanded and persisting to keep possession of Sindhia's territory, that acting-Resident Stewart desired to apply for such aid. He, however, hoped that the temporizing policy to be pursued in relation to the mutinous battalions, was likely enough to lead to a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Resident Close, however, urged upon Sindhia the necessity of adopting strong measures against Jose Alexander, but that the Maharaja must

²⁴ For. Sec. Cons. 14 August 1818, No. 20.

act independently of any assistance from the British government so that he could feel his own responsibility. The Resident was assured by the Maharaja that a force of 10 battalions with a due proportion of artillery and horse would be got ready for the punishment of Jose Alexander's refractory conduct.

It was in this dilemma Maharaja himself proposed three measures any one of which he believed would restore order and prevent the repetition of future disturbance. One was to bring the mutinous battalions from their headquarters at Ishagar to Gwalior where they could easily be kept in check and would be under the Maharaja's immediate observation; another was to deprive Jose Alexander of his present command and place a person in authority over them, on whose fidelity and obedience a perfect reliance could be placed; and if both these projects failed the last was to attack and destroy them. The Resident, however, expressed his doubts of the efficacy of either of the first two plans and passed his opinion in favour of the last. He said that the removal of Jose Alexander from his command was a measure of obvious necessity and could only be effected by moving the force which the Maharaja had expressed his willingness to place in a state of readiness for offensive operations. The Resident thought it indispensable that he should uphold the necessity of strong measures as by that means alone he could have the smallest hope of preserving the disposition now shown by Sindhia, who would certainly relax in his zeal to effect a reformation among the seditious battalions the instant he perceived that the Resident would be satisfied with moderate measures.²⁵

Towards the end of 1821, however, the problem of Jose Alexander and his troops was complicated by the revolt of the chief of Jaklowa and of Maharao Kishore Singh in Chanderi. The petty chiefs of Chanderi led by Kishore Singh declared their war of independence against Sindhia and sought

25 For. Pol. Cons. 18 December 1821, No. 22.

the help of Jose Alexander. Alexander agreed to espouse the cause of Kishore Singh provided the latter would provide funds for the payment of his men. As the disturbance in Chanderi threatened the peace of the adjoining British territory of Teheri, Resident Close ordered British troops to move upto the frontier between Teheri and Chanderi. At the sametime, the Resident advised Sindhia to deprive his mutinous troops of their guns and to distribute them in the vicinity of Gwalior so as to keep them separate and thus to dissolve the combination that existed among those battalions. The Resident hoped that by this arrangement the recrudescence of disturbance in Ahirwara might be prevented.²⁶ Sindhia took advantage of the presence of the British troops near the frontier of Chanderi to enforce the recall of Jose Alexander and his mutinous troops from the scene of their tumults to Gwalior.

In the case of Ambaji Ghatke, too, the Resident refused to give Daulatrao Sindhia the aid of the British interference. Ambaji was one of the principal silahdar chiefs of Sindhia. While the Maharaja encamped of the Sind, a daily allowance was issued to the Ambaji's men as well as those of other chiefs. When the Maharaja returned to Gwalior, this allowance was stopped. The symptoms of discontent very soon appeared, and Sindhia, in order to prevent the resort to 'Udharna', surrounded the garden in which he resided with his infantry and denied all access to the discontented silahdars. At the same time, Sindhia requested acting-Resident Stewart to allow 800 Maratha horsemen of the Contingent to proceed from Kichiwara to Gwalior and join Udaji Khatkia there. For sometime Udaji had been staying near the person of the Maharaja. Atmaram told the acting Resident that in soliciting the advance of 800 of the Contingent to Gwalior, it was not the Maharaja's intention actually to employ them against Ambaji, but until

some settlement was made with that chief he wished to have a few horsemen about him on whom he could depend. Resident Close who resumed his service at Gwalior on February 17, 1821, instructed Capt. Fielding to send there 800 Maratha horsemen under him. However, Sindhia could not come to any settlement with Ambaji who had enticed away Appa Patankar, Sindhia's son-in-law, and kept him under restraint. The Maharaja was divided between the expediency of wholly rejecting Ambaji's claims and thus abandoning his son-in-law, or of complying with them as the only way of liberating without endangering the life of his relative. In the state of anxiety and perplexity produced by the circumstances, the Maharaja was extremely desirous that the Resident should interpose his authority to bring Ambaji to reason. The Resident, however, declared his resolution to avoid interfering in Sindhia's domestic concerns.²⁷ At the sametime the Resident complained to Sindhia of the inconvenience to which other states were likely to be exposed by the Maharaja's pusillanimous attitude towards Ambaji, and urged him to adopt strong measures against that chief. Sindhia asked the Resident whether the British Government could not undertake to settle the matter, for they had on various occasions used their authority in punishing his revenue officers and zamindars when their conduct had given the British authorities sufficient cause of offence. The Maharaja told the Resident to follow the same course with respect to Ambaji. The Resident told Sindhia that could be done only if the Maharaja agreed to enter into a treaty arrangement with the British Government whereby a body of British troops would be retained near his person for the purpose of controlling his recalcitrant officers.. Sindhia, however, rejected the proposal.²⁸ But, when Ambaji and his troops took up abode at Bhilsa and threatened the lives and property of the people,

27 For. Pol. Cons. 16 March 1822, No. 44.

28 For. Pol. Cons. 7 March 1823, No. 22.

Resident Close asked Maj. Henley, the Governor-General's agent in Bhopal, to take necessary steps against them. Henley caused the Saugor Field Force to move up and take positions in and around Ambaji's camp, carefully avoiding the precipitation of extremities against that chief, observing prudence in his dealings with the latter, and persuading him to move off from Gwalior.²⁹ Sindhia's son-in-law was freed and Ambaji left the Maharaja's service taking away with him several hundreds of the best horsemen of Sindhia.

In refusing Sindhia the aid of the British interference in the cases of Jose Alexander and Ambaji Ghatke, Resident Close had acted upon the principle that Sindhia must try to make himself self-reliant and must retain control over his dependents by his own exertions. However, in 1823 an incident occurred which required that the British Government should determine whether it should give its aid to Sindhia to help him suppressing his refractory chiefs, more particularly in those cases where the interests of both the Government were involved. Mansingrao Patankar was in charge of the districts of Pawagarh and Panchmahal on the Gujarat frontier. These districts were contiguous to the British territories in the Bombay Presidency and the territories of the Gaikwad and the Holkar. Mansingrao's son, Appa Patankar, was the son-in-law of Daulatrao Sindhia. This new status in relation to his master and the weakness of the Sindhia's authority, made Mansingrao uneasy, restive and ambitious. He took advantage of insubordination and mutiny in the Sindhia's army and held out a confident hope to assert his independence without any interference on the part of British Government in support of his master's authority. He disobeyed the authority of the Sindhia, refused to submit the accounts and recruited the Arab and the Makrani tribes

²⁹ For. Pol. Cons. 7 March 1823, No. 23.

in his army. Thus, Mansingrao became virtually independent of the Sindhia's authority and control and began to administer his jahgir in accordance with his own wishes. By this incident breach of peace was seriously apprehended in the British districts contiguous to Pawagarh and therefore, Resident Close urged Daulatrao to take proper steps against Mansingrao.³⁰ The Maharaja issued orders for Patankar's dismissal and appointed Hira Khan in his place. Mansingrao, however, refused to obey his master's orders; and in the state of affairs then existing at Gwalior it seemed difficult for Sindhia to dislodge the rebel from his vantage position without any effective aid from the British Government. He, therefore, evinced his desire to Resident Close, that the British Government should assist him in effecting the removal of the rebel chief. Daulatrao was more encouraged to expect the British assistance from a notion he entertained that in the present case the interests of the two governments coincided and therefore, the British could not, with propriety, refuse its aid towards the support of measures in which he was engaged at their behest. But the Resident, conforming to the general principles according to which the affairs of the British Government at Gwalior had hitherto been conducted, informed Sindhia that he was not at liberty to extend to the Maharaja the aid of the British Government to enforce the obedience of his rebellious subjects. The Resident however, requested Daulatrao to apply some remedy to those disorders in his possessions bordering on Gujarat, the effects of which had been so grievously felt by the Government of Baroda. The Resident desired to see a proper alteration in the Government of those provinces and that if the Maharaja could not devise any means for introducing the desired change into them, the British Government would by its own means undertake the suppression of the

30 For. Pol. Cons. 24 October 1823, No. 51.

disorders which had so loudly been complained of'.³¹

When the question of giving British assistance to Daulatrao Sindhia for suppressing Mansingrao came up for decision, Governor-General Lord Amherst entertained a fear that the help to the Maharaja in this case might make the British Government a principal party to the dispute. Moreover Sindhia might make use of British anxiety for a reform in the government of his western districts into an instrument for executing his plans of revenge against an obnoxious individual whom he was long anxious to deprive of office.³¹ However, weighing fully the advantages likely to be accrued to the British Government from coercing Mansingrao Patankar in compliance with the Sindhia's wishes, Amherst authorised the Resident to assure Daulatrao Sindhia of the disposition of the British Government to gratify his wishes in the affair of his rebel jahgirdars.³² Sindhia had already shown good disposition towards the British Government by the transfer of the district of Nimar to it in perpetuity by the treaty of November 10, 1823.³³ He had also shown inclination not to hinder British efforts to seize opium passing through his territory. Under the direction of Lt. Blacker 180 maunds of opium were actually seized on their transit through his territory.³⁴ In view of his friendly attitude of Daulatrao Sindhia occasional help to him in the management of his affairs was not considered as a violation of the principle of British policy of non-interference in the affairs of the Indian states. Hence it was decided to reduce Mansingrao to submission to his master.

31. For. Pol. Cons. 24 October 1823, No. 51, para 8.

32 For. Pol. Cons. 5 March 1824, No. 103.

33 For. Pol. Cons. 5 March 1824, No. 107.

34 For. Pol. Cons. 9 April 1824, No. 85 & 86.

Lt. Blacker, the acting-Resident at Gwalior, addressed a letter to Mansingrao in which he pointed out the impropriety of his conduct and urged him to give up the fort and district of Pawagarh to Daulatrao Sindhia in obedience to his orders. To this advice, he gave an evasive reply. Therefore, on May 29, 1824, Resident Stewart informed Mansingrao about the resolve of the British Government to enforce the orders of the Maharaja of Gwalior and to make him subservient to his master by directing British troops to march against him and to bring him to his sense of duty. A stern advice was once again given to him to deliver his charge to the person appointed to replace him and to repair to the presence of the Sindhia if he wanted to avoid dire consequences of continuing to remain a rebel to his master and hence an enemy of the British Government. At the same time he was asked to note that the Resident's letter to him was not 'an idle threat but a friendly warning and that failure to act upon it would not be without grave peril and inevitable ruin to himself and his family'.³⁵

On the same date, i.e. on May 29, 1824, the Resident wrote to Capt. Fielding, the assistant Resident, about the entire state of affairs and the resolve of the British Government to start military operations after the rainy season. On June 9, 1824, directions were given to Fielding to execute the intention of the government by marching with the whole of the British force at his disposal into the jahgir of Mansingrao Patankar for the purpose of expelling him from his position. But the immediate preliminary measure to be taken was to cut off all communications between Pawagarh and the surrounding country and to place that fortified town in a state of complete blockade. If the Contingent at Capt. Fielding's disposal was not considered sufficient he was asked to take the help of the Gaikwad of Baroda. After

that, the first step to be taken was to show the orders of Sindhia to his rebel chief for the relinquishment of his post, to offer him security for his person, family and property, and a safe conduct to Gwalior in case he agreed to deliver the fort and the town of Pawagarh without any opposition. On the failure of his advice and threat, the British troops were to move to Pawagarh in a favourable season after the rains.³⁶ In accordance with these instructions, Capt. Fielding blockaded the fort of Pawagarh with the aid of the troops from Baroda³⁷ and completely cut off the supplies of the garrison with a view to starving out the rebel officer and his followers and compelling them to surrender. Finding it hard to resist the British troops Mansingrao surrendered and a seven-point agreement was signed between him and Capt. Fielding on September 13, 1824.³⁸ By this agreement the fort and the jahgir were to be handed over to Udajirao; safety of the person of Mansingrao Patankar and his property was to be guaranteed; his son Appa Patankar, was to proceed to Gwalior, Rs.50,000 were to be paid to him for the expenses of his journey to Gwalior; and until some arrangement could be made for him he was to be allowed the same amount per year for his private expenses. During this period Mansingrao was to remain in Pawagarh under British protection without any army.

The measures against Mansingrao Patankar strained the relations between Daulatrao Sindhia and his son-in-law Appa Patankar. Out of the considerations for his daughter the Maharaja invited him to Gwalior to effect readjustment with him and to wean him away from the influence of his rebel father; but

36 For. Pol. Cons. 25 June 1824, No. 63.

37 For. Pol. Cons. 15 October 1824, No. 15.

38 For. Pol. Cons. 15 October 1824, No. 19.

he refused to go to Gwalior without his father, and even with his father until all the demands were conceded. In fact, Mansingrao wanted to use his son's relation with Sindhia for extorting some jahgir and command of an army and also other advantages which Sindhia seemed determined not to concede.³⁹ In 1826, when Sindhia fell seriously ill and the struggle for succession to his power began, Mansingrao came to Gwalior with the ostensible motive of taking part in the struggle. His presence in the capital inspired intrigues, created dissensions and accentuated the problem of succession.

³⁹ For. Pol. Cons. 28 March 1825, No. 33.

CHAPTER - III

THE SUCCESSION QUESTION

Before he laid down the reins of Government in India, Lord Hastings had drawn the attention of the Home Authorities to the defect of an acknowledged heir to Sindhia's possessions.¹ It is strange that the House of Sindhia had always suffered from the absence of any nearest male heir to its dominions. Mahadji had no son of his own, but only a daughter, Balabai. By her marriage with Ladoji Shitole of Poona, she had two sons and a daughter all of whom died young. Ladoji died in 1794.² Daulatrao, who had been adopted by Mahadji as his successor, too had no son of his own. By his two wives, Rukmabai and Baizabai, Daulatrao had two daughters and a son. Unfortunately, the son died in his infancy. The eldest daughter had been married to Senapati Jaswantrao Davade, and died in 1820 leaving three daughters only. Daulatrao's second daughter Krishnabai was married to Ramchandra Patankar.³ But she didn't live along with her husband owing to the outbreak of hostilities between Daulatrao and Ramchandra's father, Mansingrao Patankar.

The absence of any nearest male heir to Sindhia's dominions caused much concern in the minds of the British authorities in India as they apprehended that it would lead to a disputed succession at Gwalior after the death of Daulatrao. Lord Hastings had suggested that a British subsidiary force should be stationed at Gwalior in order to secure the country from the commotion and disorder which might follow the death of the Maharaja.⁴ Resident Close, however, expressed his hope that the succession would not be disputed as Sindhia was likely to leave behind him an heir of some kind or another. He

1 For. Sec. Cons. 30 January 1824, No. 26, para 2.

2 S.I.S. Vol IV, p 263.

3 G.S. Sardesai, Aitihāsik Gharanyāncya Vamsavali, pp 33 and 79.

4 For. Sec. Cons. 30 January 1824, No. 26, para 3.

had not advanced beyond the middle age of life and it was hoped that he would still have a child by Baizabai. Should he fail in having a male offspring he would probably adopt an heir; or if he should be cut off suddenly or from any other cause without making such provision, his senior widow would, according to Hindu practice, have the right to adopt an heir. Assuming, however, that Daulatrao would die without any legal heir to succeed to his Government, Resident Close suggested to Governor-General Lord Amherst an arrangement to be framed during the Maharaja's life as would most naturally lead to a quiet settlement of the country after his death. According to this plan, the detailed account of which was given in the Resident's dispatch of October 31, 1824, British agents from the Gwalior Residency would be stationed in various parts of Sindhia's dominions with the general power vested in them to control the management of the police and the farming of the lands as well as to superintend the administration of justice according to the established usages of the country. In order to give effect to their authority the agents should have at their commands small bodies of Sindhia's troops to be paid through the British Government. Lest this arrangement might assume the appearance of a dangerous innovation, the Resident suggested that confidential agents from Sindhia's court should be attached with the British agents for consultations. This arrangement, Close argued, would alleviate to a great extent the evils which afflicted the country through the malversation of Sindhia's officers. Boundary disputes and all other petty claims arising out of the intercourse of the inhabitants of different countries would be easily and promptly adjusted and the revenue of the state would be much more regularly paid than it ever had been. What was more, Sindhia would in time perceive the utter futility of keeping such a large army at a very heavy expense. Thus, on the demise of Daulatrao, the Resident remarked, so great would be the British influence in all parts.

of Sindhia's territories arising from the legitimate right of interference which the British agents had acquired and which had been habitually acquiesced in by the people, that whatever arrangements should subsequently be determined on would be effected without any difficulty.⁵ Resident Close at first suggested two arrangements to be made regarding Sindhia's territories and government on his demise. One was the partitioning his dominions amongst the various persons who might lay claim to it; and the other supporting a new Head to the Government of Gwalior on certain conditions. Thinking, however, that the partition of Sindhia's territories might be exposed to objection in its principle and as considerable embarrassment might be felt respecting the preference to be given in the selection of the new chief to Sindhia's Government, the Resident advanced a third plan which, he thought, would be more acceptable to the people of Gwalior. The plan was this : the British Government would give guarantee to the jahgirdars and other landholders for the possession of all such lands as they might actually enjoy under a permanent tenure at the time of Daulatrao's death. A condition to be attached to the guarantee that the lands thus confirmed should revert to the disposal of the British Government on the extinction of the incumbent's family. The authority implied in this plan, the Resident strongly believed, would be conceded to the British Government by the majority of the people in return for protection against any anarchy and violence that might ensue on the demise of Daulatrao.⁶

Captain Stewart, Close's successor to the Gwalior Residency, expressed his view that the plan of gradually inducing Sindhia to carry on the business of his Government through the agency of British officers would not only have

5 For. Sec. Cons. 29 October 1824, No. 10.

6 For. Sec. Cons. 30 January 1824, No. 26, para 11.

a powerful effect in securing the tranquillity of the country in the event of the Maharaja's death; but would also have the more immediate effect of gradually improving Sindhia's Government and country. Stewart, however, warned the Governor-General that the introduction of this plan ought to be very slow and gradual lest it might awaken Sindhia's jealousy. It, the Resident said, must arise by degrees out of the circumstances and situation of the Maharaja's affairs and he must himself see the expediency and necessity for it.⁷ Stewart cited the case of Mansingrao Patankar to illustrate the mode in which the plan might be gradually brought into operation. The Maharaja, finding it very difficult to suppress Mansing, had requested the British Government to take military measures against him and, accordingly, Resident Stewart despatched the whole of the Contingent to Gujarat. After the expulsion of Mansing, one of the officers of the Contingent, the Resident said, might be allowed to continue in the district vested with a sort of controlling power to establish a good system of administration there, to support the authority of Sindhia's Government in its just rights, and at the same time to protect the ryots from injustice and oppression. The Resident believed that Sindhia himself, would see the utility of some arrangement of this sort, and would readily accede to it. In this manner by availing themselves of circumstances as they ^{occurred,} ~~arose~~, the British authorities in India might gradually introduce their agents into most of Sindhia's remote possessions. The influence of those agents combined with that which the Resident might in time acquire over the counsels of the Maharaja himself, might be expected to effect some improvement in the Government, while at the same time it would have the most beneficial effects in preserving the tranquillity of the country in the event of a disputed succession on the demise of Daulatrao. Besides the plan of establishing British influence throughout the country, Resident Stewart suggested the

7 For. Sec. Cons. 29 October 1824, No. 10, para 3.

gradual reduction of the greater part of Sindhia's army, for in case of a disputed succession the ill-paid and indisciplined troops would pose a serious problem to the British Government. The Resident also added that Sindhia should be persuaded by degrees to place other portions of his troops, besides the Contingent, at the disposal of the British and thus to accustom them to the latter's influence and control, and, secondly, to discharge his superfluous troops.⁸

However, the various plans and suggestions submitted by Close and Stewart for streamlining Sindhia's administration were doomed to failure. Daulatrao, no doubt felt the necessity of a more close and intimate connection with the British Government; but he was unwilling to allow the latter to interfere in any manner in the internal administration of his state. He wished the British Government to allow everything to remain as it was during his life-time. Governor-General Amherst, too, as a matter of policy was reluctant to interfere in any manner in the internal concerns of Sindhia and therefore, he instructed the Resident not to press upon the Maharaja any plan for the improvement of his Government and country.⁹

Early in January 1826, Daulatrao fell seriously ill. He was examined by Mr. Pantón, the official surgeon of the Residency, who reported his condition to be exceedingly serious. Considering his recovery even under the most favourable circumstances to be extremely faint and fearing a fatal result, Stewart advised the Maharaja to decide the question of succession before his death, but the latter 'made no illusion whatever to a successor'.¹⁰ He was no doubt aware of the dangerous nature of his disorder, but the Resident could not ascertain whether or not Daulatrao would take any steps to secure the

8 For. Sec. Cons. 29 October 1824, No. 10, para 7.

9 For. Sec. Cons. 26 November 1821, No. 2.

10 For. Pol. Cons. 27 January 1826; No. 42.

succession to any particular person, or whether he would make any public declaration on the subject. The Resident, however, assured the Governor-General that there was no probability of any dispute regarding the immediate succession to the power and authority of Sindhia as his junior wife Baizabai would in the first instance succeed to the authority of her husband, and the energy of her character was likely to keep in check the turbulent spirits at Gwalior. Since her marriage with Daulatrao in 1798, Baizabai had exercised an imperious influence over the mind of her husband. Like her father Sharzarao Ghatge, she was 'cunning, resolute, capable of understanding difficult conversation and well-versed with the affairs of the state'. Till his death in 1809 Sharzarao had controlled Sindhia's affairs and during this period he trained his daughter how to control a passionate and weakminded husband and thus gradually take up in her own hands the powers of the state.¹¹ She held the rich and prosperous districts of Ujjain, Sahajahanpur, and Burhanpur as her jahgirs. Thus the power which she enjoyed combined with the possession of the treasures of the state, was destined to render Baizabai's influence irresistible, independent of the right which she might acquire by assuming charge of the Government.¹²

Daulatrao's senior wife Rukmabai whose claims were more reasonable and rightful, had always been treated with entire neglect owing to predominant influence of her junior compatriot in the palace. The Resident was of opinion that even in the exercise of her legitimate right of adoption according to the Hindu usages, Rukmabai would be entirely guided by Baizabai. In July 1824, when Stewart discussed with Atmaram the plans for improvement in Sindhia's Government, the latter communicated to the Resident the Maharaja's

11 D.B. Parasnis, Maharani Baizabai Saheb Shinde Hyanche Charitra, p.40.

12 For. Pol. Cons. 27 January 1826, No. 45.

desire that the British Government would allow everything to remain as it was during his life-time, and that after his death they might make what arrangements they pleased. At this, the Resident asked Atmaram in a jocular way whether, if the British Government would pledge themselves to make no change during the Maharaja's life-time, he would in return nominate the Company his heir, in the event of his having no son. Atmaram replied that Sindhia could not make a will of that kind, as it would interfere with Baizabai's right of adoption, although the Maharaja seemed to be very indifferent as to whom she might adopt after his death.¹³ This evidently reveals what a predominant influence the lady had on the mind of her husband¹⁴ and from this the Resident concluded that Baizabai would quietly succeed to the Maharaja's authority. In the event, however, of succession to the Regency be disputed or the troops assembled at Gwalior mutinied, the Resident suggested, an effective British force should be deployed in such a strategic position near the frontier of Sindhia's state, as would check and overawe all parties. In such a case, the Resident concluded arrangements might at once be concluded for bringing Sindhia's territories more immediately under British protection in order to secure their permanent tranquillity.¹⁵

Governor General Amherst, however, in his letter to Resident Stewart dated January 27, 1826, stated that the British Government did not 'pretend to any right to control and regulate the succession to the State of Gwalior'; nor had it in view any plan to bring Sindhia's territories under its protection of acquire 'a title to control the internal concerns of the ruler' who might succeed him. But the peace and tranquillity of Central India was a prime

13 For. Sec. Cons. 29 October 1824, No. 11.

14 Queen Mainabai Pawar of Dhar in a letter dated April 29, 1816 to Baizabai alludes to the latter's imperious influence over her husband Daulatrao. (S.I.S. Vol IV, Letter No. 32, pp 33-34).

15 For. Pol. Cons. 27 January 1826, No. 45, para 8.

concern of the British authorities and therefore, it was desirable that Sindhia should make a future settlement of his state so that there might not be any trouble after his death. The Governor-General advised the Resident to persuade the Maharaja either to adopt a son himself, or to give the requisite permission in writing for making such adoption upon his death. The Governor-General added that to render the performance of the adoption ceremony by the widow fully legal and binding according to Hindu law, the husband should convey to her a distinct authority to adopt after his demise. Amherst, however, informed the Resident that the British Government would recognise the legality of an adoption by the widow even without such express permission and even to the extent of overriding the letter of law provided the selection was made by the general voice or by a majority of the chiefs and principal persons of the country according to usage.¹⁶ It seemed, however, that the Governor-General attached more importance to a quiet succession of Baizabai to the authority and power of Sindhia than to the adoption: "Whether an adoption takes place or not, the event most to be desired both for our own interests and those of Sindhia's country and government generally, on the Maharaja's demise is the tranquil and undisturbed accession of the Baizah Bae to the exercise of the Powers of the Regent."¹⁷ As she possessed energy, spirit and abilities unusual in her sex and would be supported by the principal party, if not by all the leading men in the State, the British Government 'shall have every motive for recognizing her elevation to the Regency'. The Governor-General instructed the Resident to act accordingly if Baizabai succeeded quietly to the power and authority of her husband, and to assure her of the full disposition of the British Government to renew through her, the relations of amity and alliance which connected the Sindhia's state and the British Empire in India. In the event of a disputed succession to the

16 For. Sec. Cons. 27 January 1826, No. 47.

17 Ibid, para 4.

Regency the Resident was asked to sound Baizabai whether she required British military assistance to put the house of Sindhia in order.¹⁸ The Governor-General was prepared to afford military support to the party in authority at Gwalior in return for reimbursement of expenses of the British army of support, a favourable adjustment of all pending questions regarding Sindhia's possessions in the Deccan¹⁹ and, lastly, a promise of hearty co-operation in the arrangements made by the British Government for restricting the growth and export of Malwa opium,²⁰ which the residents had been carrying.

18 Ibid, para 5.

19 It was the intention of the British Government to assume without delay the exercise of its 'undoubted authority as sovereign of the Poona territory' over the rent free and jahgir villages of Sindhia and his dependents in the Deccan. However, the British Government agreed to allow the whole of the villages in the Deccan to remain in the possession of Sindhia himself and his dependents during the Maharaja's life-time as far as the enjoyment of the revenues was concerned. (For. Pol. Cons. 14 November 1820, Nos. 4 & 5; For. Pol. Cons. 25 October 1822, Nos. 2 & 3; For. Pol. Cons. 2 May 1823, No. 2).

20 The suppression of the Pindaris and the establishment of tranquillity opened to the inhabitants of Malwa a prospect of participating in the profits of the opium trade, and the Indian merchants soon began to export opium, not only to various places on the continent, but to ports on the western coast for shipment to the eastward. Thus, the Company's opium monopoly was exposed to the disadvantageous competition by the cultivation of the poppy in Malwa. Prohibitory duties were imposed on all opium not made within the boundaries of the Presidency of Bengal. It was also decided to endeavour to enlist the Indian princes in the service of prohibition, and induce them to place restrictions on the culture of the poppy, and prevent its transit through their territories, by undertaking to pay them an annual fixed sum as an equivalent for any diminution of revenue which they might sustain in the assessment of the lands and the loss of duties upon the passage of opium.

(Mill & Wilson's History of British India, Vol VIII, pp 395-37 & Vol IX, pp 174-75).

on clandestinely ever since the suppression of the Pindaris.

Towards the end of February 1826, Sindhia's health improved a little and in a private interview with the Maharaja on March 4, Resident Stewart again raised the question of succession. He stated that it was Governor-General's wish that the Maharaja's sovereignty should be preserved not only during his life-time but that he should transmit it unimpaired to his successor also. The uncertainty which existed with regard to the succession to the Maharaja, the Resident added, provided ample grounds for apprehension that there might be dispute on the subject on the demise of the Maharaja. The Resident then asked the Maharaja if he had in his own mind decided who, in the event of his death, should be his successor. To which Maharaja replied that he had not. He added that although he had relations descended from the same forefathers several generations back they had now become so remote that they could hardly be tied with any filial bond with Sindhia. The Maharaja then entered into some geneological details regarding his family to show that he had no relations but such as were collateral and very remote. Under these circumstances, the Maharaja said, he could not come to any decision in regard to his successor. When the Resident said that although from the rate of progress of the Maharaja's recuperation there was every hope of his living many more years and the probability of his having a male heir, yet it was extremely desirable that he should provide for a different contingency either by adoption or by preparing beforehand a written authority to some person to adopt an heir in the event of his death. The Maharaja replied that he was quite aware of what the Resident advised and that he would now take the subject into his serious consideration and let the Resident know his determination afterwards. But again the Resident pointed out to the Maharaja that it was neither necessary nor expedient to delay the communication of his

resolution on this subject. But the Maharaja again expressed his wish to defer it for sometime more. Thereafter, the Resident did not think it proper to press the subject further, as he thought that the Maharaja's health had evidently much improved and that there was not an immediate apprehension of his death. From his conversation with Daulatrao, the Resident gathered the impression that the Maharaja had certainly thought of a successor to him, but that the hopes of having a son and the total indifference which he felt towards those who were distantly related to him by blood rendered him extremely averse to admit the necessity of making an adoption.²¹ However, these factors, the Resident thought, did not stand in the way of Sindhia's leaving a written authority to adopt after his death and that was the course which the Maharaja, was likely to pursue. No such arrangements, however, would be made by the Maharaja, in case Baizabai expressed her desire to keep in her own hands the authority and power of the state after the demise of her husband.²²

In the summer months of 1826, the events at Gwalior were rapidly moving towards a crisis. In the month of March Mansingrao Patankar, along with his son Appa Patankar, had come to Gwalior; but the attempts at reconciliation between Daulatrao and his son-in-law seemed impossible. At the instigation of Mansingrao, disturbances occurred at Gwalior on June 18. In this affray eighty people of Sindhia and twelve of the rebels were killed. Both Baizabai and her brother Hindurao advised the Maharaja to retaliate which the latter, however, refused to do and asked the acting-Resident Fielding (Resident Stewart being at that time on leave) to blockade the house of Mansingrao and restrict his movements.²³ Fielding, however, expressed his apprehension that the rebel, actuated by a desire to crush Baizabai and Hindurao who had advocated extreme

21 For. Pol. Cons. 28 March 1826, No. 33.

22 Ibid.

23 For. Pol. Cons. 21 July 1826, No. 24.

measures against him, might instigate Rukmabai to claim her right as the elder wife of Sindhia to exercise the sovereign authority as Regent on the demise of her husband.²⁴ The acting-Resident added that the public opinion at Gwalior was also in favour of Rukmabai's assuming the powers of the Regent as the succession to power by Baizabai and her brother were viewed with general apprehension. During a conversation with the acting-Resident, Atmaram made a hint that Sindhia's indecision and procrastination in the choice of a successor arose from the fact that the Maharaja had been unwilling to deprive his elder wife of the privilege of being an adoptive mother which Baizabai desired for herself. On being questioned by the acting Resident, Atmaram said that in the event of the Maharaja's death without making any previous testamentary provision for a successor, the most regular right of adoption would fall to his first wife Rukmabai.²⁵

In a private conference with the Maharaja held on August 24, 1826, the acting Resident discussed with the latter the succession question which had assumed a serious character by the presence of Mansingrao at Gwalior. At this conference, besides the acting-Resident, the Maharaja and Atmaram, Hindurao alone was present and he suggested that Mansing should be forced to leave Gwalior. The Maharaja wanted to know the opinion of the acting-Resident in this matter, but the latter, in accordance with the Governor-General's orders "to withdraw from all concerns or interference whatever in the dispute" declined from advocating active measures against the recalcitrant chief. The Maharaja, too, wanted on this as on former occasions some measures by which he might attain the incompatible objects of reducing Mansingrao to submit to his pleasure without employing force. In this meeting the acting-Resident also raised the question of succession. He made a suggestion to the Maharaja

24 For. Pol. Cons. 15 September 1826, No. 7.

25 Ibid.

that if there was any impediment to the early adoption of a successor or any motive to prevent his making his intentions on this subject public, he should deposit with the Resident a sealed testamentary instrument to be acted on in case of Maharaja's sudden death.²⁶ To this the Maharaja gave no reply; but Atmaram told the acting-Resident later that the Maharaja had an intention of taking such a step. Should the Maharaja do anything of this kind clandestinely, the acting-Resident remarked, the presumption would be that the arrangement was contrary to the interests of Baizabai. Early in September 1826, the Maharaja's health continued to decline and the views of different parties began to manifest themselves. From Atmaram, the acting-Resident came to learn that Baizabai had declared that the adoption of a son should be made by her or else not at all; and that Balabai supported the right of Rukmabai. Baizabai was also endeavouring to strengthen herself by getting the general command of the army conferred on her brother Hindurao but Sindhia did not appear inclined to concede this point. In order to obtain this and other objects, Baizabai quitted the camp on September 2 and stayed away about a week in a fit of displeasure and only returned on receiving a peremptory letter from Sindhia to do so immediately. From all these incidents, the acting-Resident concluded that matters had not been going on entirely in Baizabai's favour and he sought the instruction of the Supreme Authority whether he should convey to the Maharaja the Governor-General's desire, as contained in the latter's previous despatch dated January 27, 1826 that Baizabai should succeed to the exercise of the sovereign power of the Gwalior State. This, the acting-Resident concluded, might decide the succession question in Baizabai's favour.²⁷

26 For. Pol. Cons. 6 October 1826, No. 41.

27 Ibid.

The Governor-General felt much disturbed when he learnt that Baizabai's accession to the sovereign power would not go undisputed, and that Rukmabai, instigated by Mansingrao Patankar, might claim her right to the Regency. The Governor-General regretted that the Maharaja, instead of vindicating his authority and suppressing the troubles excited by Mansingrao within the capital, had recourse to the feeble and fruitless expedients of endeavouring to buy over Mansingrao's adherents, and 'to spin out negotiations' with the enemy. On the other hand, the bold stand taken by Hindurao in the private conference of August 24, 1826 that force should be applied against the rebel chief, was much appreciated by the Governor-General. He informed the acting-Resident that had the latter advised the Maharaja to enforce Hindurao's suggestion, his action would have been met with approbation from the Supreme Authority. However, the Governor-General advised Fielding to abstain from any further direct interference in this affair and from becoming a party to any arrangement which the Maharaja might enter with Mansingrao.²⁸ So far as Daulatrao's intentions with regard to a declaration of his successor were concerned, the Governor-General could not accept the views of Atmaram, as reported by the acting-Resident, that Sindhia's indecision and procrastination in this matter arose from his unwillingness to deprive his elder wife Rukmabai of her right to adopt an heir to the throne. On the contrary, the Governor-General scarcely doubted that Daulatrao desired and expected Baizabai to succeed him in the exercise of the sovereign power and general management of affairs. She appeared to be the trusted person of all his councils, to exert a marked and leading influence in the administration of public affairs, to have the command of a large part of the public treasure and might therefore, in some degree be considered actually in possession of the powers of the Government with Sindhia's consent and concurrence. That Baizabai was in the confidence

28 For. Pol. Cons. 6 October 1826, No. 39.

of her husband, the Governor-General added, had been proved from the fact that in the important conference of 24 August, held for the express purpose of discussing the question of the succession, her brother Hindurao alone was permitted to attend. If the cause of Baizabai was unpopular, the Governor-General contended, neither could Rukmabai lay claim to any positive degree of public favour. She was a secluded female who had never been allowed to participate in public affairs and had long lived in complete retirement. Whatever might be the relevant position of Baizabai and Rukmabai according to the established principles of Hindu law, neither widow would possess a valid and substantial title to adopt unless formally empowered by the husband. In the event, therefore, the Maharaja died without taking any formal steps, to provide for the succession, the Governor-General remarked, the lady who could best support her pretensions and unite the voices of the majority of the leading men in the country on her side, might fairly be regarded as the legitimate ruler for the time being until some more satisfactory arrangement could be framed. In so far as 'consideration of expediency' were concerned, the Governor-General felt that the comparatively strong and efficient Government of Baizabai supported by her brother, would better conduce to the interest of the British Government and the welfare of the Gwalior State, than the regency of Rukmabai acting under the guidance and influence of Mansingrao Patankar. Amherst, therefore, adhered to the view taken by him in the instructions to the Resident dated January 27, 1826 that the British Government must look to Baizabai as the party to exercise sovereign power in the character of Regent on the demise of Daulatrao.²⁹ The Governor-General, however, did not think it proper to adopt the suggestion of the acting-Resident that the latter should convey to Sindhia a declaration of the favourable disposition of the Supreme Government towards Baizabai. Any active interference in her

²⁹ For. Pol. Cons. 6 October 1826, No. 39, para 5.

behalf would be inconsistent with the declared policy of the British of standing neutral, and might involve them in obligations to support the cause of Baizabai. Besides, the Supreme Authority were not still perfectly informed either of the feelings and wishes of the chiefs, and people of the country or the rights and claims of different pretenders to the throne.³⁰

The Governor-General, it seemed, gave little credence to the account of Fielding regarding the state of affairs prevailing at Gwalior. He made a query about it from the Resident then taking rest at Simla. The Resident reiterated his former opinion that in the event of Sindhia's death, Baizabai would succeed with little or no opposition to the chief authority in the state. Even if a considerable party at Gwalior supported the claims of Rukmabai, the influence and the Maharaja's treasures which Baizabai and Hindurao already possessed would give them so decided a superiority as to enable them with facility to crush their opponents. So far as the right of adoption was concerned, the Resident admitted that 'the strict justice of the case' demanded that 'Rookma Bai as the senior widow would have the best claim to adopt an heir', if an adoption should at all take place without any will of Sindhia's directing it to be made. Yet even in that case, the Resident added, Rukmabai would make the adoption agreeably to the wishes of Baizabai and act entirely in subordination to her. With regard to the legality of adoption, the Resident's view was that 'an adoption by either widow in order to be valid should be made by the express will of the deceased husband'. If, however, Sindhia died without making any such will, the Resident remarked, 'might will give the right' and in that case Baizabai would either herself adopt or make Rukmabai adopt the child of her own choice and that she would exercise the powers of the Regent during the minority of the adopted boy.

After his return from Simla to Gwalior, the Resident paid a visit to the Maharaja on November 10, 1826 and found him in a much better condition than before. In fact he had become so much accustomed to his disease that it had lost all its sting. The Maharaja himself opened the topic of succession and promised to speak on that subject in a private interview after a few days. This interview was held on November 27 in which the Maharaja discussed the question of adoption and treated it as a very delicate issue. From the discussion the Resident gathered that the Maharaja's indecision was caused partly by the embarrassment that might be caused by the birth of a son to him afterwards, partly by the very remote degree of consanguinity in which persons were likely to be related to him, and partly by the difficulty to decide whether it would be proper to resort to a very unusual practice of adopting a son from a different family and how it would be received by all concerned.³¹ The Resident stated that since the Maharaja had now so much recovered, the adoption of an heir was certainly 'much less - an object of solicitude' than it had been, and that he would soon find a suitable person for the purpose. The Resident added that if the Maharaja should afterwards have a son of his own, still the adoption would not be the cause of any embarrassment, since the son of his own body would in that case succeed to the sovereignty and a suitable provision could be made for the adopted son. The Resident then proceeded to ascertain the Maharaja's sentiments with regard to the person best entitled to succeed to his authority in case he died without making the proposed adoption. The Maharaja at first mistook the nature of the Resident's question, and thought that the latter meant the succession to the throne instead of the succession to the mere exercise of authority on his demise. He replied that there was no one sufficiently nearly related to him as to acquire a right to succeed; that his sons-in-law, brother-in-law, or Balabai had no claims, and that in such cases like the one in his

31 For. Pol. Cons. 22 December 1826, No. 25, para 3.

state, a man's wife, having any sense or understanding, would be the person best entitled to manage the affairs of the state after the death of her husband. When the Resident pointed out that the Maharaja had two wives, Daulatrao replied that according to usage, his senior wife Rukmabai was entitled to assume charge of the Government after his demise. But, the Maharaja remarked, she was entirely unfit for the onerous task as she had no knowledge of the world and no experience in the intricate business of administration. She was fit only to sit quietly at home, to pass her days in enforced idleness and nothing more, Sindhia added.³² This remark of Daulatrao was taken by the Resident as an 'explicit' declaration on the part of the Maharaja as to Baizabai's succession to the management of the state after his death and, therefore, the Resident did not pursue the matter further.

At 11 o'clock in the morning of March 21, 1827,³³ Daulatrao Sindhia expired. Two hours before this said incident occurred, Hindurao called for Resident Stewart who, 'conceiving that the Maharaja must be on his last moments' reached the Palace 'in a very short time'. There Hindurao told him that the Maharaja had come to the resolution of making an adoption and that the pictures of two boys had been received from the Deccan, but that they themselves could not reach Gwalior till then. Emphasising the need of an immediate adoption so that the adopted son could set fire to the funeral pyre of the Maharaja, Hindurao told the Resident that the Maharaja could adopt one of the three youths then present in the palace, whose relationship to the Maharaja was not much remote than that of the two boys whose pictures had been received from the Deccan. The Resident replied that if the Maharaja publicly named one of the boys in the Deccan as his heir it would be considered as

32 For. Pol. Cons. 22 December 1826, No. 25, para 4.

33 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 4.

valid as an adoption. But if it would be preferable to make the adoption on the spot, it should be done at once.³⁴ Then he went to see the Maharaja who was lying in a semi-conscious state. The Resident went up to him, took his hand in his own, and leant over him so as to hear what he might say. The Maharaja remained silent for sometime, 'apparently unable to speak', and at least he began to speak in a distinct and audible voice, so as to be heard by everyone present and even, the Resident believed, 'behind the Purdah' close to the Maharaja where Baizabai, Rukmabai and Balabai were present. He said to the Resident to do whatever the latter thought proper. The Resident replied that everything should be arranged according to the Maharaja's wishes, and he added some words of consolation. After a long pause, the Resident asked the Maharaja whether there was anything else that the latter would wish him to say. At this the Maharaja replied that he had a great deal to say to the Resident. The Resident waited for a considerable time to let the Maharaja speak; but the latter could not say anything more. At this time, Baizabai said from behind the screen that Doctor Panton should be called in. Then the Resident retired to an upper apartment where he stayed for about an hour and within that time the Maharaja expired.³⁵ The scheme of adoption was thus, the Resident reported to the Governor-General, defeated by the Maharaja's dying, so unexpectedly at last.³⁶

Soon after the Maharaja had expired, Atmaram brought to the Resident a memorandum purporting to be the Maharaja's last 'Will' although it did not bear any signature of Daulatrao.³⁷ This document was addressed by the Maharaja to the Company's Government and it consisted of seven Articles. The first Article declared the Maharaja's intention, in consequence of his indisposition, to adopt a son and the Company was solicited to support those on whom the

34 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 7, para 2.

35 Ibid, para 2.

36 Ibid, para 9.

37 Ibid, para 11.

management of state would devolve. The last Article said that the authority of the Maharaja and that of his younger wife should be exercised over the adopted son and over the state as long as they lived.³⁸ Atmaram reported that both Hindurao and Bapu Raghunath had requested the Resident to put his signature on the paper with the following note: "The Maharaja spoke to me personally regarding the settlement of the state, and gave me a written memorandum on the subject according to which the duties of friendship on the part of the Company's Government shall continue to be discharged as they have hitherto been".³⁹ The Resident, however, refused to sign the paper as it did not bear any signature of Daulatrao and because the late Maharaja had said nothing to him about such a 'Will'. Atmaram returned with this reply, but soon after came back with a more urgent request that the Resident should sign the paper so that by sending it so signed to Baizabai, it would be a source of consolation to her and prevent her from ascending the funeral pyre of her husband which she threatened to do.⁴⁰ Still, the Resident declined affixing his signature to the paper. Regarding the antecedents of the alleged 'Will', the Resident came to know from Atmaram that the persons under whose directions it had been drawn up were Hindurao, Bapu Raghunath, Raoji Khasgiwala, Appa Chitnis and Dajiba Potnis. On the morning of the Maharaja's death when Atmaram went to the Darbar, Bapu Raghunath was writing it, and Dajiba Potnis was copying it. Atmaram was told that they were transcribing a memorandum regarding the adoption. Before he could know more about it, Atmaram was sent away by Hindurao to bring the Resident who had already been called for through a messenger. Atmaram met the Resident half way between the Residency and the Palace, and when he returned along with the Resident, Dajiba was still occupied in copying the memorandum. Atmaram heard some discussion between

38 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 10.

39 Ibid.

40 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 10.

Dajiba and Appa Chitnis as to the expression "younger wife" in the last Article. It had been at first written merely "wife", but Appa Chitnis suggested that to remove all doubt the expression should be "younger wife".⁴¹ This suggestion was accepted and accordingly the last Article was written.

Rao Senapati who was also present at this meeting, informed the Resident that he had at first proposed a different draft of the 'Will' which did not contain any reference to either of the wives of Daulatrao, but which only said that the son adopted by the Maharaja would manage the state with the help of the British Government.⁴² But this draft was rejected by the other chiefs. The Resident came to know that it was originally intended to take the said document prepared by the chiefs to the Maharaja, to obtain his sanction and probably his signature to it and then put it into his hands so that he might have delivered it to the Resident as his last 'Will'. But the sudden demise of the Maharaja defeated that intention.⁴³ The Resident was also informed that the document had been taken to the Maharaja after he had left the latter's room and retired to the upper apartment of the Palace. But the Resident gathered from Balabai who had all along been with the Maharaja on the day he expired, that the said document had neither been shown to the Maharaja nor had Balzabai been consulted in regard to the composition of it.⁴⁴ Hindurao also admitted the truth of what Balzabai stated regarding the "Will". He said that he felt ashamed of the share he took in the business; but excused himself on the plea that, in the confusion and anxiety of the morning, he hardly knew what he was doing, and when asked by some of the copywriters (mutsuaddies) about having a Will made out, he heedlessly gave his assent, but

41 For. Sec. Cons. 28 April 1827, No. 2, para 10.

42 For. Sec. Cons. 1 June 1827, No. 15.

43 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 9.

44 For. Sec. Cons. 28 April 1827, No. 2, para 10.

took no part in the composition of it. The anxiety which Bapu Raghunath manifested to obtain the Resident's signature to the abovementioned document, immediately after the Maharaja's death, excited suspicions in the mind of Baizabai, of a design on his part to secure himself in the situation of Mukhtar independently of her. Rao Senapati was at first consulted in regard to the proposed 'Will' of the Maharaja. But he stated to the Resident that he had at first proposed a different draft of the Will which did not contain any reference to either of the Sindhia's widows, but which only said that the Maharaja with his own hands had adopted a son who, with the help of the British Government, would manage the state. But this draft 'Will' of Rao Senapati was not accepted by Bapu Raghunath and the Dhar Vakil Ganapatrao. Rao Senapati then left the meeting and went away to another apartment of the Palace.⁴⁵ Thus, it appears that the chiefs differed as to the proposed arrangement to be made after the demise of Sindhia and as such, it cannot be said that Baizabai had united the voices of the majority of the leading men on her side. And Atmaram was so busy with other matters that he had not been consulted in the preparation of it. Baizabai herself totally disavowed the document and she intimated to the Resident directly through Atmaram that she knew nothing whatever regarding the preparation of that paper nor was it ever submitted to the late Maharaja. The Resident's own belief, was that the Maharaja had never seen the written document. However, the Resident expressed his view that though the Memorandum purported to be the last 'Will' of the late Maharaja, was of no authority, Baizabai might desire to enter into some agreement with the British Government by which the stipulations of the alleged 'Will' would be guaranteed. In return, she would probably agree to those arrangements which the British Government wished to effect

45 For. Sec. Cons. 1 June 1827, No. 15.

with Sindhia's Government. However, the immediate object which, according to the Resident, required attention was the future maintenance of the Contingent. The annual pension of four lacs of rupees payable to the Maharaja by the British Government, had so long been appropriated to the payment of the auxiliary force. Now, on the demise of Daulatrao that amount lapsed to the British Government and it was necessary that the Sindhia's Government should provide some other sources to make up the deficit. Besides, there were also a debt of twelve lacs of rupees due by the Sindhia's Government to the British on the Contingent account. On these points, the Resident sought the Governor-General's instructions.⁴⁶

However, before any instruction came from the Governor-General, the Resident paid Baizabai a visit of condolence on March 25, 1827, While offering his condolence and consolation to the Bai, in the presence of Hindurao, Bapu Raghunath, Raoji Khasgiwala and Atmaram, the Resident adverted to the future management of the affairs of the state and said that 'the eyes of all seemed to be turned to her'. It was, therefore, the 'more necessary that she should not indulge in unavailing grief, but exert her energies so to conduct herself that the loss which the state had suffered, might not be perceived'. In this way, the Resident added, she would 'best show her regard for the late Maharaja'.⁴⁷ In reply, the Bai referred to the friendship that had so long subsisted between the late Maharaja and the British Government and said that she would undertake the Government only under the superintendence of the Resident. She added that while the management of affairs was in her hands, the state would not be impaired.⁴⁸ The conversation between the Resident and the Bai was not direct. She was in a different room at the door of which the Resident stood and Hindurao, Raoji Khasgiwala and Itu Paolia, a confidential servant of the Bai acted as messengers. The

46 For. Sec. Cons. 6 April 1827, No. 9.

47 For. Sec. Cons. 12 April 1827, No. 2, para 3.

48 Ibid, para 4.

Resident also sent a separate and 'distinct message of condolence' to Balabai, to Rukmabai, and to the Maharaja's daughter and grand-daughters who were all with Baizabai at that time. But as the Resident 'did not receive any very distinct message' from them in reply, he had 'some doubts' regarding the delivery of his message to them.⁴⁹

Thus, despite the Resident's unequivocal reluctance to consider the alleged Memorandum as the late Maharaja's 'Will', and notwithstanding the Maharaja's dying declaration to the Resident that the latter might make arrangements which he would think proper for the management of the Maharaja's state, Baizabai had virtually assumed the sovereignty of the state. This she had done in the capacity of Regent even before she received any official recognition from the Governor-General to this effect.⁵⁰ However, the Resident noticed a general wish, particularly predominant among the Marathas, to see a son of the Sindhia family adopted and the name of the Sindhia's sovereignty upheld. Jealous of the power of Baizabai and her brother Hindurao they wanted to get this object fulfilled under the auspices of the British Government. They also wished that the adoption should be performed in a regular manner by the elder widow of the late Maharaja. But not a single voice was raised in favour of Rukmabai becoming the Regent. Sometime previous to the death of Daulatrao, the Resident took measures to ascertain the sentiments of Balabai on this subject and she, though by no means partial to Baizabai and professing much sympathy for Rukmabai, declared that she did not think the latter fit to hold the reins of government.⁵¹

Lord Amherst was of opinion that although the alleged 'Will' of Sindhia

49 Ibid, para 6.

50 For. Sec. Cons. 20 April 1827, No. 7.

51 For. Sec. Cons. 20 April 1827, No. 2.

had no legal validity, it spoke of the sentiments and intentions of the Maharaja when he had reason to apprehend that his end was approaching, and was at all event an evidence of the views of the party actually in power and the extent to which they desired the support and assistance of the British Government. By countenancing and supporting opening the Regency of Baizabai, the Governor-General believed 'the understood wishes' of Daulatrao Sindhia could be fulfilled and therefore, he had no longer any hesitation in authorizing the Resident to treat with and recognize Baizabai as the Regent of the state of Gwalior, and to assure her of the British disposition and intention to renew, through her, the relations of amity and concord which had hitherto connected the two states.⁵² While Lord Amherst felt that the devolution of sovereign authority on Baizabai was strictly in accordance with the wishes of her husband, he desired that respect should also be paid to the general wishes of the people which could only be done by the adoption of a boy of the Sindhia family by Baizabai as the Regent. The Governor-General said that he did not feel any regret or disappointment from the consideration that Baizabai had succeeded to the exercise of authority in the natural course of events, and through her own influence, instead of by 'the decided intervention of the British Government'. Even then, the Governor-General added, the British Government could not 'escape from a certain degree of interference and consequent responsibility' connected with the proceedings of the Regency as Sindhia had delegated to the British in his last moments the trust of arranging matters after his death. Besides, Baizabai's declaration that she could only venture to undertake the administration of her late husband's territories under the Resident's superintendence coupled with the known wishes of all persons at Gwalior who looked to the British

52 For. Sec. Cons. 1 June 1827, No. 4, para 4.

Government as the only power competent to preserve peace in the state, imposed upon the British Government almost a moral right of intervention in the settlement of Sindhia's Government and country.⁵³ Under the circumstances, mere acknowledgement by the British Government of the new government at Gwalior amounted to its guarantee. The Governor-General, however, was not willing to give this guarantee without any return. In the first place, he desired that the Contingent, the advantages of which had been repeatedly recognised by the late Maharaja, should be continued. Indeed, Lord Amherst thought it expedient to augment the force, but what concerned the Governor-General most was the immediate liquidation of the debt from the Sindhia's state arising out of the maintenance of that body. Besides, in consequence of the lapse of the late Maharaja's personal pension of four lacs per annum which had formed part of the funds appropriated for the payment of the Contingent, it became necessary that fresh security should be given for the provision of the requisite amount. The Governor-General suggested that the funds for this purpose should be furnished in the shape of a deposit of cash from the hoarded treasure of the Gwalior State the interest of which at 5% per annum would cover the above deficiency.⁵⁴ Secondly, the Governor-General desired the new government at Gwalior to co-operate with the British in their opium arrangements. Any sacrifice of revenue to be incurred by the Sindhia's Government from its adherence to these arrangements would be made good by the British Government. The compensation finally settled on this account, the Governor-General hoped, might be made available for the payment of the Contingent, should either the increase of that force, or a more expensive re-organization be deemed advisable. A reform and gradual reduction

53 Ibid, para 6.

54 Ibid, para 7.

of the unruly army of the Sindhia's state was another object which the Governor-General desired to settle with the new Government at Gwalior. The existence of a mutinous, ill-regulated and unwieldy army at the very heart of the country possessed or protected by the British, had caused serious concern to the British authorities. The disbandment or gradual reduction of a portion of these troops and the adoption of a regular system of pay and organization for the remainder would, the Governor-General thought, conduce materially to the real interests of the state of Gwalior. Lastly, the Governor-General was determined to proclaim the right of the British Government to the whole of the villages not specifically excepted from the general cession by the 8th article of the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon and to resume such of the remainder as did not appear to be held in inam, jahgir or otherwise by valid titles, leaving such as were confirmed after the scrutiny to Sindhia's successor and his dependants.⁵⁵ The Governor-General desired to put these points together in the form of a treaty which would at the same time acknowledge Baizabai as Regent until the boy to be adopted should have attained the years of discretion, and guaranteeing to the new Government the whole of the late Maharaja's possessions excepting those in the Deccan which the British Government desired to resume.⁵⁶ When Resident Stewart communicated to Baizabai the above proposition of the Governor-General, she at first expressed her inability to advance so large a sum of money. She said that the troops of the state had been clamouring for their arrears of pay and therefore, the advance of such a huge amount for the maintenance of the auxiliary horse, at this moment, would not augur well. When the Resident suggested that instead of appropriating the amount as funds for the maintenance of the Contingent she could simply make a loan of the amount to

55 For. Pol. Cons. 1 June 1827, No. 4, para 10.

56 Ibid, para 15.

the British Government at the established rate of interest of 5% per annum. She could, the Resident added, receive the total annual interest herself or appropriate it to any purpose she thought proper. At this, Baizabai agreed to make a loan of one crore or at all events of eighty lacs of Rupees to the British Governments. On May 3, 1827, at an assembly of the chiefs and officers of the Sindhia's Government, the Governor-General's letter recognising Baizabai as the Regent was read and explained in a distinct and audible manner. Thereafter, Baizabai requested Stewart to address the assembly directing them to be obedient to her which the Resident did accordingly although 'very briefly'. Hindurao further added that those who did not obey the orders of the Regent would be punished.⁵⁷

In the meantime five boys of the Sindhia family had arrived from the Deccan and they were sent to the Residency, apparently with a view to ascertain which of them, in the opinion of the Resident, the most eligible to succeed to the late Maharaja. The Resident's choice fell on Mukutrao, son of Patloba who was among the nearest male relatives of the late Sindhia. The boy was eleven years of age and in point of personal appearance and intelligence had the advantage of all other boys. He could read and write a little and ride on horseback. In those qualifications also he had the decided superiority over the others. The astrologers considered Mukutrao's nativity and the signs by which they affect to penetrate into futurity, to be also most favourable so that in every respect none of the other boys could come in competition with him.⁵⁸

Baizabai, on the other hand, had a scheme of adopting a boy of her own family and of placing him on the musnad after his marriage with her youngest

57 For. Sec. Cons. 8 June 1827, No. 13.

58 For. Sec. Cons. 6 July 1827, No. 2.

grant daughter. That boy was the grandson of late Viswasrao by the female line, son of Jattirao Patankar and brother of the Rani of Kolhapur. The boy's mother was the first cousin of Baizabai. But Resident Stewart pronounced this scheme to be against the public opinion in Gwalior, inconsistent with the Hindu usage and against the wishes of the late Maharaja. Besides, it was difficult for Baizabai to get that boy as the Raja of Kolhapur was not inclined to hand over his brother-in-law to her custody due to his hostility to her family. The British Government refused to exercise its influence on the Raja of Kolhapur for handing over the boy to Baizabai.⁵⁹ The latter, therefore, showed some procrastination in adopting Mukutrao, while Stewart wanted the ceremony of adoption to take place without delay so that no complications could arise in future. The principal bankers, feeling the state of affairs at Gwalior to be insecure on account of the conflicting views of Baizabai and the English, discontinued their business. "These circumstances had probably the principal effect in making the Bai give her assent to the elevation of Moogat Rao".⁶⁰ She was persuaded by Atmaram and Hindurao to give up her original plan and to decide to adopt the boy of the Resident's choice. She gave her reluctant assent on two conditions. First, Mukutrao should be married to her youngest grand-daughter, either before or after he was placed on the musnad. Secondly, when the adoption and marriage took place, Baizabai herself should be allowed to go on a pilgrimage to Benaras.⁶¹ While the first condition was intended to effect security to her position and to attach the future sovereign more closely to herself, the second was only an expression of her grief and dissatisfaction at an arrangement in which she was least interested. On the evening of June 16, 1827 the whole of the chiefs and ministers of the Sindhia's Government were

59 For. Pol. Cons. 29 June 1827, No. 2.

60 Quoted by J. Sutherland, Sketches of the Relations, p. 159.

61 For. Sec. Cons. 6 July 1827, No. 2.

assembled at the Durbar when the Baizabai's intention to adopt Mukutrao and place him on the musnad was formally announced and 'the opinion of the assembly on the subject was asked'. Not a dissenting voice was raised on the occasion, all agreed to and applauded the measure. The Shastris were next consulted as to the propriety of uniting Mukutrao in marriage to the youngest grand-daughter of Baizabai. The Shastris having declared the union legal and that it might take place either before or after Mukutrao was placed on the musnad, it was decided that the marriage should be solemnized before the adoption. Accordingly, on the 17th the marriage took place. On the next day the father of Mukutrao made over his son to Baizabai and renounced all right and claim to him by the ceremony of pouring water from his own hand into that of the Bai. Thereafter, the Bai took the boy and her grand-daughter in her arms and the ceremony of both of adoption and marriage seemed to have been completed. Hindurao brought out the boy from the interior apartments and handed him to the Resident so that the latter could place him on the musnad. This the Resident did accordingly.⁶² Baizabai had intimated her intention of giving a new name to the young Maharaja and according to her wish he was henceforth to be known as Jankojirao Sindhia.⁶³

62 For. Sec. Cons. 6 July 1827, No. 4.

63 Ibid.

CHAPTER - IV

THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION : THE CRISIS PRECIPITATED

Although Baizabai had been persuaded by the British Government to adopt Mukutrao as the successor of late Daulatrao Sindhia, she could not give 'a more ready and cheerful assent' to the arrangement. In fact, as Resident Stewart had noticed, she adopted the boy very 'reluctantly'.¹ Evidently it was her desire to keep in her own hands the lever of authority of the state. In an interview on May 3, 1827, when the Resident communicated to Baizabai the Governor-General's desire that a boy should be adopted by her, she agreed to comply with the wishes of the Governor-General. But at the same time she expressed her hopes that the British Government would still consider it as 'a duty' to see that 'no injustice' was done to those whom the late Maharaja had cherished and that they should be continued in the enjoyment of what he had bestowed on them.² Obviously, she referred to the last Article of the late Maharaja's 'Will' which mentioned that Baizabai should retain her authority as Regent during her life. But Baizabai knew that the said 'Will' had no legal validity as it had not been duly signed by the late Maharaja. Baizabai, therefore, wanted this stipulation to be guaranteed by the British Government in return for the loan which she had agreed to make to them. Although Stewart declared that the British recognition of her Regency was unconditional³, Baizabai's assumption was that it depended largely on her agreeing to advance that money. Her lingering belief was strengthened by the assurances of the Resident that if she remained faithful to 'the promises and assurances' which she had given to him, the British Government would be prepared to give 'every proper support to her authority'.⁴

1 For. Sec. Cons. 6 July 1827, No. 4.

2 For. Sec. Cons. 8 July 1827, No. 13.

3 Ibid.

4 For. Sec. Cons. 6 July 1827, No. 4.

What the assurances and the promises were, the Resident did not mention. But at the interview of May 3 when the Governor-General's approval of Baizabai's Regency had been communicated to her, two things had also been discussed. One was the adoption of a successor to the musnad of Gwalior and the other was the making of a loan of a crore or eighty lacs of Rupees by the Regent to the British Government, to both of which Baizabai had agreed.

After Jankojirao had been adopted as the successor to late Daulatrao, Baizabai expressed her wish to the Resident that new arrangements should be entered into between Gwalior and the British Government 'to define the path in which both should go'.⁵ The Resident too admitted that the change of circumstances occasioned by the death of Daulatrao Sindhia and the assumption of the sovereign authority by Baizabai necessitated the conclusion of a new treaty between the two governments. He agreed to submit to the Bai soon a draft of the proposed treaty. Before, however, any definite proposal for a treaty came from the British Government, two memorandums - one from Baizabai herself and the other from Sindhia's Government - were submitted to the Resident. In her personal memorandum, Baizabai referred to the late Maharaja's dying declaration to the Resident that the British Government might do with his state what they thought proper according to the long-standing friendship between the two states. The Resident, the memorandum said, wanted the integrity and independence of Gwalior to continue but in return for a loan of a crore of Rupees. Notwithstanding the poverty of Sindhia's state, the Bai would do her best to advance as much money as possible. The Resident, on his part, would mediate a treaty between Sindhia's Government and the British. Any Resident that might come to Gwalior after the conclusion of

5 For. Sec. Cons. 8 July 1827, No. 13.

for money. The memorandum further said that as the Bai was the owner of the money lent to the British Government, the annual interest of the said loan should be paid to her or to such persons as she might name. In order to avoid any future dispute regarding the loan, the Bai desired an acknowledgement of the said money to be issued in her name.⁶ The memorandum from Sindhia's Government contained twelve Articles. It was laid down in Articles 4 and 10 that the Resident should not entertain from Rukmabai any proposal for placing her to the Regency nor should the Resident encourage the idea of certain chiefs of the Gwalior State that the British Government would be paid a tribute of six-annas of the revenues of the Gwalior State, if the Resident helped in placing Rukmabai at the head of Sindhia's Government.⁷ The 6th Article said that the instructions of the British Government to the Maharaja should be verbally communicated to him in the presence of the Regent and other responsible Ministers of the State, and that the same form should be observed in the intercourse between the Maharaja and the Resident as had prevailed during the life-time of the late Maharaja. The 8th Article required that the Resident should not interfere between the Sindhia's Government on the one hand and its troops and zamindars on the other. Similarly, the 11th Article said that the British Government must not interfere between the ryots and the amils of the state. But two most important questions which the Gwalior Darbar desired to be settled between itself and the British Government were those relating to Sindhia's possessions in the Deccan and the continuance of the Contingent. The Sindhia's Government entertained a hope that it would be allowed to hold the same rights and possessions in the Deccan under the British authority as it had done under

6 For. Sec. Cons. 7 December 1827, No. 6.

7 That such proposition had been made to the Resident was admitted by him in his despatch of 1st October to the Governor-General. (For. Sec. Cons. 7 December 1827, No. 5.)

under that of the Peshwa. It was also proposed by the Sindhia's Government that as the Contingent had already achieved its purpose of suppressing the Pindaris, it should now be discontinued.⁸ Thus, these two memorandums seemed to reveal Baizabai's inmost mind. She wanted to keep in her own hands the full powers of the state with a view to preserving its independence. Shrewd observer of events as she was Baizabai had been watching with a view not unmixed with a serious concern the rapid advance of the British power in India since the wars of 1817-18. In fact, she had desired her late husband to oppose the British in 1817.⁹ Now, the recent events at Bharatpur* must have made her suspicious of the future move of the British in Gwalior after the demise of Daulatrao. In order to offset the British interference in the internal concerns of Gwalior which the British might feel tempted to do so in view of the boy Maharaja's minority and immaturity, Baizabai wanted to keep in her own hands the control of affairs of the State during her lifetime.

Governor-General Lord Amherst, in a letter dated December 7, 1827, informed Resident Stewart that the Sindhia's Government was at liberty to punish its refractory subjects and zamindars and to adopt such measures as it might deem proper for the maintenance of internal order and tranquillity of the territories under its control. The few points remaining to be adjusted with the Sindhia's Government, the Governor-General added, did not seem of sufficient importance to require the formality of a new treaty.¹⁰ When the Resident explained to Atmaram that there had been no interruption of the

8 For. Sec. Cons. 7 December 1827, No. 7.

9 For Sec. Cons. 29 May 1818, No. 44.

* The care of the young Raja of Bharatpur had been confided to the principal widow of the late Raja, as nominal Regent. The management of affairs was entrusted to Jawahir Sal and Chintaman Faujdar, who, however, were subject to the control of the British Resident. The British agent was to exercise a general superintendence over the person of the minor Raja, and the administration of the principality. (Mill & Wilson, History of British India, Vol IX, p 142).

10 For. Sec. Cons. 7 December 1827, No. 8.

friendship subsisting between the Gwalior State and the British Government, and that no sufficient grounds or materials existed for the conclusion of a new treaty between them, the vakil admitted the truth of it; but he added that in view of the reports current in Gwalior that a new treaty would be made with the British Government, Baizabai was afraid of some unfavourable impression which would be made on the public mind, should no engagement of any kind be entered into. The Resident then asked Atmaram to ascertain what were the stipulations which Baizabai would wish to insert in the proposed treaty. Accordingly, Atmaram consulted Baizabai, and held several discussions with the Resident on the point. From these the Resident gathered that the chief, if not the only, object of Baizabai in urging the conclusion of a new treaty between Gwalior and the British Government, was to obtain through the medium of such an instrument, the formal recognition of her right to exercise the sovereignty of the Gwalior State in the character of Regent during her life. Subsequently, in a conference on February 10, 1828, where besides Resident Stewart and the acting-Resident Major Fielding, Atmaram and Hindurao were also present, Baizabai asserted that the maintenance of her own authority for life was perfectly conformable to the usage and custom of India. She looked upon the Sindhia State as 'having died with the late Maharaja'. But the assurances which the Resident had given her on his visit of condolence and which had been repeated in the letters of the Governor-General 'revived' the sovereignty in her person' and that sovereignty she was resolved to maintain. She asked the Resident how she could submit 'to act as a subordinate part under any other person' when she had held unlimited control even during the life of the late Maharaja. She added that if it was the intention of the Governor-General not to allow her to enjoy her authority for life, the Resident should communicate that decision to herself 'secretly' so that she could take timely measures for abdicating the

sovereignty and thus 'save herself from the disgrace of appearing to be forcibly pulled down' from the position where she had been elevated by the British Government. In thus expressing herself in a decided manner, Baizabai expected that the Resident should immediately intimate to her the decision of the British Government on the subject, and declare at once whether she was to be the Regent for life or not. The Resident, however, expressed his inability to take any decision of his own on the point immediately. He only said that in recognizing Baizabai as the Regent on the demise of Daulatrao Sindhia and also recommending the adoption of the present Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia, the British Government only planned to adjust the affairs of the state. It now expected that the administration of the state would be carried on according to the laws and usages in force among the Marathas without further interference by the British Government. The Resident then tried to remove from Baizabai's mind all apprehensions regarding her future status by expressing a hope that when the present Maharaja would arrive at years of discretion, he should continue to pay every deference to her to whom he owed his elevation to the throne of Gwalior. But all these words of the Resident failed to set at ease the 'impatient temper' of the Bai. She was very much anxious that the question regarding her authority for life should be decided without a moment's delay, and in the event of that decision being unfavourable to her, she was determined to abdicate immediately.¹¹

While communicating to the Governor-General the sentiments of Baizabai regarding her claim to be recognized Regent for life, Resident Stewart suggested that the question regarding the mutual authority of both the Regent and the young Maharaja should now be decided; for by leaving the question undecided, the Resident added, a door was open for constant intrigues at the

11 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 20.

present moment, and probably for a rupture between the parties in the future. Even at his present minor age, the Maharaja was not of a disposition to submit quietly to the trammels of tutelage; and Baizabai, on her part, had not taken care to reconcile him to her stewardship. It was likely, therefore, that on the young Maharaja's attaining the years of discretion, little unanimity would exist between him and his mother by adoption. The Resident's own view was that the British Government should give recognition to Baizabai's authority for life; because she had made the adoption only in compliance with the wishes of the British Government on that subject. But the more plausible argument in favour of recognizing Baizabai's authority during her life the Resident said, was that it would enable the British Government to settle, according to its own wishes, certain objects which it had in view.¹² First, there was the question of resumption of Sindhia's possessions in the Deccan. The Bombay Council had informed the Resident at Gwalior that the villages not reserved to Daulatrao Sindhia by the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon, but which he had been allowed to enjoy for his life only, would lapse to the British Government consequent upon the demise of the Maharaja.¹³ The Sindhia's Government, however, claimed that some of those villages had been Daulatrao's inam, i.e., lands that had descended to him from generation to generation and, therefore, they could not be alienated. Resident Stewart also expressed his view that it would be contrary to the spirit of the Article 8 of the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon to resume all the villages. He, therefore, suggested the principle of limiting the British resumptions to all grants made subsequently to the accession of Daulatrao and leaving to his family all that had descended to him from his ancestors by whatever tenure held. As to the remaining possessions of the Sindhia family in the Deccan which the British Government

12 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 20.

13 For. Sec. Cons. 26 October 1827, No. 3.

desired to obtain permanently by means of exchange of lands in the North or in lieu of money payment, the Resident hoped that Baizabai would readily agree to the proposed exchange if she was recognized by the British Government Regent for life.¹⁴ Secondly, the Resident argued, the Gwalior Contingent could be reorganized according to the wishes of the British Government and be continued, if Baizabai was allowed to continue as Regent during her life. It was contended by the Sindhia's Government that originally the Gwalior Contingent had been formed to eradicate the Pindari menace, and as that purpose had already been achieved, there was no use of maintaining the said force at a huge cost. Governor-General Amherst, in his despatch of September 17, 1827, to the Resident, had remarked that the Contingent was an useful body and it had rendered valuable services to both the Governments of the British and the Sindhia's during the life-time of the late Maharaja and, therefore, it should not be disbanded.¹⁵ Although Daulatrao's pension of four lacs of Rupees appropriated to the payment of the Contingent lapsed to the British Government, on his demise, the Governor-General assured the Sindhia's Government that the expenditure of the corps would be brought within the limits of the funds assigned for its maintenance after deducting the lapsed stipend of the late Maharaja. Accordingly, the Resident made some reductions in the expense of the corps without much diminishing its efficiency. Still, there remained a debt of about fourteen lacs to be paid off by the Sindhia's Government, who, therefore, objected to this arrangement and proposed that the auxiliary troops should be reduced so as to bring the expense within the amount strictly applicable to their payment and the funds appropriated to the payment of the debt be applied to that purpose only. Resident Stewart, therefore, suggested to Sindhia's Government another plan which proposed to reduce the

14 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 21

15 For. Sec. Cons. 5 October 1827, No. 3.

number of horsemen from 2000 to 1000, but in lieu of the 1000 men thus discharged a battalion of infantry with two guns was to be attached to the Contingent. The Resident was of opinion that the Contingent so constituted would be more efficient than it was at that time, and the expense would be so far reduced as to leave a surplus applicable to the extinction of the debt, or at all events fully sufficient to pay the interest of it. Lastly, another important object which the British Government had in view, was to secure from Baizabai a loan of a crore of Rupees, which she had promised at the time when she was recognised Regent by the Governor-General. The Resident informed the Governor-General that he had received so far revenues amounting eighty lakhs of rupees on account of the last year. The acknowledgement for the receipt of the said amount was deposited by the Resident with the acting Resident Major Fielding to be given to the Sindhia's Government as soon as one or two of the accepted orders on the revenues were paid. With regard to the remaining twenty lacs, the Resident observed that as great difficulties were likely to occur in raising this amount, the loan should be limited to eighty lacs. Should, however, the Governor-General still demand the completion of the loan to a crore, the Resident added, Baizabai would make every exertion to complete the amount, if her claim to the Regency for life was admitted by the British Government.¹⁶

Bayley, the acting Governor-General, however, refused to recognize Baizabai's right to exercise the sovereignty of the Gwalior State for life on condition of the settlement of the points mentioned above. The Governor-General desired that those questions should be settled in the usual manner and without any pre-condition. So far as the resumption of the Sindhia's possessions in the Deccan was concerned, the Governor-General informed the

acting-Resident Major Fielding (Resident Stewart being then on leave) that the British Government was determined to enforce its just rights over those villages and lands of the Sindhia family in the Deccan which were not specifically exempted from the general cession by the 8th Article of the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon. As to the long irritating problem of the extent of exemption included under the said article and the controversy regarding 'Jangaon', the Governor-General rejected Resident Stewart's principle of compromise that the British Government should confine its resumptions to all grants made subsequently to the accession of Daulatrao Sindhia, and concurred with the views expressed by the Bombay council that 'Jangaon' should be considered as a single village, and not a Tarraf, comprehending many village as interpreted by the Sindhia's Government. Accordingly, the acting-Resident was instructed to ask the Sindhia's Government to surrender the lands and villages in the Deccan not specifically reserved to it by the 8th Article of the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon. After the resumption of those lands had been made, the Governor-General remarked, the questions might be separately considered of the footing on which the Sindhia State was entitled to hold its remaining possessions in the Deccan and whether the British Government should attempt to obtain the cession of them to its territories in exchange for lands of equal value in other quarters.¹⁷ Secondly, the measures of the Resident for reducing the expense of the Gwalior Contingent within the limits of the funds actually applicable for its maintenance, were approved of by the Governor-General, who hoped that the Sindhia's Government would allow the Contingent to continue in its present footing. With respect to the loan of a crore of Rupees as promised by Baizabai, the Governor-General

17 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 25, paras 12 - 14.

asked the acting-Resident to abstain from pressing the Regent to complete the loan to the extent of one crore of Rupees and intimate her that the transaction was now to be considered as closed. An acknowledgement for eighty lacs of Rupees already paid by her should be prepared under the seal and signature of the Governor-General. Bayley, however, objected to the insertion, as desired by Baizabai, in the said acknowledgement of a sentence to the effect that she was the owner of the money advanced to the British Government and that it should be paid to any person to whom she might make it over. The Governor-General desired it to be omitted unless the British Government were bound by any expectation held out to the Bai at the time of her agreeing to advance the money that such a clause would be introduced into the Government acknowledgement or unless it could be shown that the money was really her own and not the property of the state. In this connection, the Governor-General referred to the debt of fourteen lacs due by the state of Gwalior to the British Government on account of the expenditure of the Contingent, and instructed the acting-Resident to inform the Regent that as the British Government did not urge her to fulfil completely her promise of lending a crore of Rupees to it, she would agree to the Governor General's proposal of deducting the debt from the loan of Rupees eighty lacs. Interest on the difference of Rupees sixty-six lacs was to be paid to the Regent in future. After this arrangement had been made, the Governor-General said, the loan transaction should be considered to revert to the footing originally contemplated, viz. the Regent should appropriate funds for the liquidation of the debt to be incurred by the Sindhia's Government on account of the expenditure of the Contingent.¹⁸

With regard to the claim advanced by Baizabai to be acknowledged as

¹⁸ For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 25, paras 8 - 9.

Regent of the State of Gwalior for her life-time Bayley informed the acting-Resident that the sentiments of the Governor-General-in-Council were entirely adverse to a compliance with the Bai's views in this respect. She should be 'distinctly reminded of the fact that the British Government had never professed to regulate the Gwalior succession or to dictate any particular arrangement or form of Government' subsequent to the demise of Maharaja Daulatrao Sindhia. In recognising Baizabai's elevation to the office of the Regent, the British Government only acted upon 'the principle of acknowledging what existed', as the Bai had actually assumed the powers and functions of the Regent before she was formally recognised as such by the Governor-General. Moreover, in giving recognition to her, the British Government acted in consonance with 'the wishes of the great majority', if not all, of the leading and influential chiefs of Gwalior. The adoption of an heir to the throne of Gwalior, too, could not be considered in any sense a measure of the British Government, although the opinion of the Governor-General had been expressed in favour of it from the belief that the popular voice among the Marathas urgently demanded a recourse to that measure. Long before the sentiment of the Governor-General on the propriety of the adoption was communicated to the Regent, arrangements had already been made for bringing from the Deccan five boys from among whom an heir to the throne was to be chosen. Afterwards, a doubt arose in the mind of the Regent whether the youth to be selected should be her own relation at Kolhapur or one of those who had arrived from the Deccan. It was at this moment, that the British Government expressed its opinion in favour of Jankojirao's adoption. It was obvious, therefore, that Baizabai would have made an adoption even if the British Government did not intervene in this matter. As to the Resident's argument that the interests of the British

Government would be best served by recognising Baizabai's regency for life, the Governor-General observed that when the young Maharaja would attain the years of discretion, he might not recognise the privileges granted to the British by the Regent. Even if it could be shown that any material advantages would result to the British Government from a state of things in which there would be two sovereign authorities, the Governor-General added, that consideration, would not warrant the British Government's encouraging and supporting the Bai, in an attempt to usurp the sovereignty of the state, contrary to law and right. Taking into account all these facets of the problem of the mutual authority of both the Regent and the young Maharaja, Lord Amherst observed that the best course of policy for the British Government to pursue in such a case would be 'simply to acquiesce in an arrangement which the chiefs and people of the country think proper to submit to'.¹⁹

When Major Fielding communicated to Baizabai the Governor-General's views that there were not enough materials for the conclusion of any new treaty between Gwalior and the British Government, and that the questions regarding the Deccan, the Contingent and the loan should be settled in the manner proposed by the Governor-General, she informed the acting-Resident that she had no idea of opposing the wishes of the British Government in anything, that the debt might be deducted from the loan and the arrangements for the Contingent continued as at present. But she believed in the cautious good sense and moderate views of the British Government that the latter would not insist on the resumption of the village in the Deccan which the late Maharaja had been allowed to enjoy during his life.²⁰ When, however, the acting-Resident informed her of the intention of the British Government to

19 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 25, paras 3-4.

20 For. Pol. Cons. 1 August 1828, No. 25.

exert its rights by treaty and conquest over those villages, Baizabai handed over to Fielding the orders for the surrender of those villages to the British Government.²¹

Though Baizabai had accepted calmly the British Government's refusal to recognise her Regency for life, she was determined to keep in her own hands the lever of the State by relegating the young Maharaja to the background. This was evident from the manner in which the order for the surrender of the Deccan villages was prepared. At first it was made out in the name of the Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia. But as there were some errors in the enumeration of the villages in it, the acting-Resident returned the order to the Sindhia's Government. In the second order, the errors were corrected, but Baizabai had given orders that the Maharaja's name should be struck out and her own substituted.²² The breach between the young Maharaja and the Regent widened by the death of the Maharaja's wife, the grand daughter of Baizabai, which occurred on February 22, 1829.²³ The Maratha chiefs desired that the Maharaja should now espouse the elder sister of his deceased wife, who was still un-married. This, they hoped, would continue the sovereignty of the state in a descendant of the late Maharaja and would give the present Maharaja an additional degree of personal security by the renewed connection between him and the Regent.²⁴ Baizabai, however, seemed averse to marrying her grand-daughter to Jankojirao.²⁵ Her attitude towards him also changed. For some time after the death of his wife, the Bai treated him with more personal kindness; but her kindness and grief wore off as days passed by and his condition became little better than that of a prisoner. He was never allowed

21 For. Pol. Cons. 20 February 1829, No. 33, para 1.

22 Ibid, para 9.

23 For. Pol. Cons. 20 March 1829, No. 27.

24 For. Pol. Cons. 20 March 1829, No. 28.

25 For. Pol. Cons. 10 July 1829, No. 40.

to appear in the Darbar, or to go out for recreation. He was seldom admitted to the Bai's presence and his education continued to be totally neglected.²⁶

While the acting Governor-General Bayley apprised Baizabai of the British Government's disapproval of her claim to be recognised Regent for life, he expressed a hope that she would pursue a line of conduct conformable to the good relation between the Regent and the young Maharaja. But it was not an easy task to make Baizabai comply with the pious wishes of the British Government. For the acting-Resident the task was to persuade the Bai to treat the young prince with commiseration and to impart to the latter an education and habits that would enable him to bear the burden of the state in future. The Governor-General asked Fielding to make these observations 'in the spirit of friendly counsel' and to avoid carefully 'every appearance of dictation or authoritative interference in domestic concerns'.²⁷ These instructions had been issued in March 1828; but, for long one year, the acting-Resident did not communicate these sentiments of the Governor-General to the Regent. He had been looking out for 'an opportunity of remonstrating' with her.²⁸ This he got when the British Government took exception to the unusual delay made by the Gwalior Government in sending replies to the complimentary letter addressed to it by the new-Governor-General Lord William Bentinck on his assumption of the charge of the Supreme Government in India. Bentinck addressed a letter to the acting-Resident directing him to observe to the Regent that the whole affair had been allowed to languish owing to neglect and want of courtesy on her part thus violating all diplomatic norms. The acting-Resident was also instructed to state to the Regent that royal seals should be prepared without delay for the young Maharaja as the acknowledged

26 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 44.

27 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 25, para 6.

28 For. Sec. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 44, para 3.

successor to the throne of Gwalior.²⁹ When Fielding wished to communicate to the Regent 'in private' the contents of the Governor-General's letter regarding the Maharaja's seals and the complimentary letter addressed to the Gwalior Government by Bentinck on his assumption of Governor-Generalship in India, Baizabai readily responded to his wishes. On August 19, 1829, the acting-Resident had an interview with her. Baizabai sat behind the screen and said that she had no objection to listen to the acting-Resident *tete-a-tete* what he said, but that she could not reply to him, and, therefore, the conversation should pass through Atmaram. To this the acting-Resident did not object. Before making any reference to the above letter, Fielding explained to the Regent those portions of Lord Amherst's letter of March 14, 1828, which contained the replies of the British Government to the Bai's request to be acknowledged as Regent for her life, and pointed out 'the futility of any expectation of the establishment of her Regency for life through the influence or authority of the British Government'.³⁰ He then held 'a little discussion' on the letter of the present Governor-General for which he had sought the interview. The Regent regretted the delay made by her in answering the complimentary letter of the Governor-General on his assumption of the charge of the Indian administration. As regards the non-preparation of a seal for the young Maharaja, Atmaram observed that it had not been thought safe or proper to have new seals in consequence of the intrigues carried on by one Sayyed Immam at Agra and Delhi at the beginning of the last year. Fielding, however, argued that the said intrigues which had been carried on by so obscure a personage as Sayyaed Immam and, which had occurred upwards of a year ago, could not be considered as a sufficient excuse

29 For. Pol. Cons. 10 July 1829, No. 41.

30 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 44, para 5.

for the non-preparation of the seal for the young Maharaja. The acting-Resident then communicated to her Lord Amherst's advice regarding her treatment of the young Maharaja and pointed out 'in pretty strong terms' that her treatment of the young Maharaja was very harsh and such treatment was 'derogatory to her own character' and 'offensive to the feelings of everybody at Gwalior'. The acting-Resident felt convinced that such action on the part of the Regent, would be highly disapproved by the Governor-General-in-Council.³¹

However, Colonel Fielding's remonstrance in his private capacity on the Regent's conduct to the young Maharaja did not produce the desired effect. Occasionally, the boy was given permission to amuse himself on the roof of the palace by flying kites, and by way of giving him an education befitting his high station the Regent had him taught 'to sing'. From all these it appeared to the acting-Resident that the Bai's determination was to keep the young Maharaja in the background and 'make a cypher of him as much as possible'. Fielding apprehended that the adopted heir to the House of Sindhia might some day fall a victim to the Regent's jealousy and love of power, if no measures were taken to awaken in her mind, a sense of the duties which she owed to the future ruler of the state and representative of her deceased husband. The British Government should also manifest an interest in the fate of the young Maharaja; and the acting-Resident believed that the proper treatment of the boy by the Regent could be obtained from 'a strong and perhaps a public remonstrance in the name of the Governor-General'.³² Such remonstrances, the acting-Resident added, would be in conformity to the wishes of the chiefs and people at Gwalior, who expected that the British Government, by virtue of its 'universally acknowledged political supremacy' and of the trust reposed in it for looking into the affairs of the state, under the late Maharaja's dying

31 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 44, para 8.

32 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 45, para 4.

declaration, would interfere to the extent at least of offering friendly counsel to the Bai. These chiefs and people would themselves have asserted their own right to restrain and guide her conduct had they not been prevented by the impression that the Regency possessed the countenance and support of the British.³³ In order to fix the Governor-General to the determination of making a public remonstrance to the Bai and make its languages more forceful, Fielding tried to estrange him from the Regent. The acting Resident said that she had never evinced a cheerful compliance with a request or recommendation of the British Government. 'It is far from improbable, therefore, that a remonstrance even from the Governor-General on the subject of her treatment of the Maharaja would not be properly attended to and it would of course be proper to determine beforehand whether his Lordship-in-council would submit to a want of compliance on her part or be prepared to enforce it'.³⁴

Governor-General Bentinck agreed with Fielding that the conduct pursued by Baizabai towards Jankoji Sindhia was discreditable to her own reputation and opposed to the wishes of the chiefs and people at Gwalior; and that, in completely neglecting his education, the Regent failed in the discharge of a solemn and essential obligation of her station. The Governor-General added that the British Government could not contemplate such a state of things with indifference, for, 'in the peculiar circumstances of the Gwalior administration and the actual state of our power in India the maintenance of silence on the occasion might not unreasonably be construed by all parties into acquiescences'.³⁵ The Supreme Authority in Calcutta therefore decided to adopt the acting Resident's suggestion that a

33 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 45, para 5.

34 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 45, para 6.

35 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 45.

remonstrance should be addressed in the name of the Governor-General to the Regent in this 'delicate matter'. Accordingly, on October 6, 1829, the Governor-General wrote a letter to the Regent, alluding generally to the dissatisfaction created by the course of policy she had been pursuing towards the young Maharaja. In conformity with the evident wish of the chiefs and people over whom she ruled as the Regent, and the indisputable interests of the state of Gwalior, the Governor-General urged her 'in friendly, but unreserved language' to adopt a worthier and 'more becoming line of conduct' towards the young Maharaja.³⁶ All these principal topics had been briefly touched upon by the Governor-General in his letter and he asked the acting-Resident to hold a suitable discourse with the Bai enlarging upon and enforcing those points at the time of delivering the letter.³⁷ Accordingly, at a personal interview with the Bai, Col. Fielding discussed the contents of the Governor-General's letter and told her that if she had a mind to contradict the propositions contained in that letter, she should state her arguments in writing. At this Baizabai submitted to the acting-Resident a memorandum of seven Articles. In the first Article, the Bai said that she had been prevented from affixing the young Maharaja's name in the seals from apprehension of intrigues. In the second Article she confessed that the Maharaja was not allowed to move freely lest he should be led astray by evil counsellors; and, therefore, by the third and fourth Articles she proposed to take written engagement from the relations of the Maharaja's family and from the Ministers as well pledging their fidelity to her and exercising sobering counsel on the impressionable Maharaja. In the fifth place, the Bai desired that all inam and other grants made by her should be countersigned by the Resident as a pledge that they should be irrevocable.

36 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 49.

37 For. Pol. Cons. 23 October 1829, No. 48.

The sixth Article said that though Resident Stewart had engaged to procure for her within a month a new treaty with the British Government and an acknowledgement for the eighty lac loan lent by her to it, neither promise had yet been fulfilled. Lastly, the Bai requested that the British Government would recognise her as Regent during her life. She also submitted a draft of the answer which she expected to receive from Governor-General on the above propositions.³⁸ Fielding forwarded to the Governor-General both the papers unaccompanied by any remark of his own. Resident Stewart, however, (who resumed his duty at Gwalior after the expiry of leave), frankly expressed his views to the Governor-General relative to the course of policy to be adopted in the present delicate situation arising out of Baizabai's claim to be recognised Regent for life and her ill-treatment of the young Maharaja. The Resident did not think it politic to remove the Bai forcibly from the Regency, but suggested the adoption of such measures by the British Government as would induce her to resign voluntarily. In the first place, the British Government should make a public declaration that it would not regard as valid any public instrument of the Gwalior State which was not authenticated by the Maharaja's seal. Such a public declaration, the Resident conceived, would shake the power of the Bai, to its basis and the intimation to her of such intention on the part of the Government would compel her to administer Sindhia Government in the name of the young Maharaja. Secondly, the Resident believed that the establishment of a free and unreserved intercourse between the Resident at Gwalior and the young Maharaja would prove a powerful and perhaps efficient check to any ill-treatment of the Maharaja by the Bai. Should the Bai refuse her assent to the establishment of such an intercourse with the boy that would betray her alleged ill-treatment of the boy beyond any reasonable doubt. In that case she must have to reckon

38 For. Pol. Cons. 16 April 1830, No. 53.

with any measure which the Governor General might adopt to protect the young Maharaja from the fury of the Regent.³⁹

Baizabai's reiteration of her claim to be recognised Regent for life brought forth from the Governor-General a strong remonstrance. He instructed Resident Stewart to declare at the court of Gwalior that the Bai having adopted Jankoji as heir to the musnad of Gwalior and the validity of that adoption having been acknowledged and sanctioned by the voice of all parties of the country, the young Maharaja was entitled by right to assume reins of Government on the expiration of his minority. The British Government, therefore, could not lend its countenance and support to a different arrangement involving the maintenance of the Bai or any other person in the exercise of sovereign power for life without a manifest violation of the proper and recognized usage of Hindu states. As far as personal considerations were concerned, the Governor General added, the British Government would have no motive for adopting on the present occasion any other course than that which law and justice equally prescribed. The disposition and character of the Bai, especially after her elevation to the office of the Regent, had certainly not generated such confidence as to induce the people or the Company's Government to desire that her authority should continue beyond any reasonable length of time. Even assuming that the kind treatment of the young Maharaja would probably be better secured by conceding the point, The Governor General was not prepared to make such a sacrifice of principle for the attainment of that object even if other more legitimate means should fail in effecting that desired improvement in his condition. The Governor General agreed with Resident Stewart that Sindhia's Government should be administered in the young Maharaja's name and public documents of importance authenticated with his seal.

The Governor-General also accepted the view of the Resident that the Maharaja should be treated with respect and kindness and that he should receive proper education. Accordingly, the Governor General authorised the Resident 'to declare in the first instance privately to the Bai and eventually publicly' that the British Government would not recognise as valid any public instrument of the Gwalior State which was not authenticated by the Maharaja's seal. In the second place, the Governor-General desired that 'a free and unreserved intercourse' should be established between the Resident and the young Maharaja which would prove 'a powerful and perhaps a sufficient check upon any ill-usage' of the latter. It was anticipated that on knowing the inflexible reluctance of the British Government in advocating her cause for retaining the supreme power of the state for life, and the moral determination of the Company to secure the rights of the young Maharaja, Baizabai might take steps to retire from the Regency. In that case the Governor-General advised the Resident not to dissuade her from taking such a step.⁴⁰

On June 12, 1830, Resident Stewart conveyed to Baizabai the sentiments of the Governor-General regarding her treatment of the young Maharaja and demanded that she should, within a reasonable period, give a distinct and final reply to the two following propositions. First, whether she should adopt the seal of the Maharaja and administer the government in his name; and, secondly, whether she would allow a free and unreserved intercourse between the Resident and the Maharaja. Although Baizabai was not opposed to a free intercourse between the Resident and the Maharaja, she objected to the adoption of the Maharaja's seal. The Resident then prepared a Proclamation which said that for sometime past, the Regent had advanced a claim to the actual sovereignty of the state during her life. In conformity

with this design she had declined notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of the British Government to administer affairs of the Sindhia's state under the name of the young Maharaja or to attach his seal to any of the public letters or documents of the Government. She had, moreover, with the same view allowed the Maharaja to be treated with neglect and disrespect and had avowed her intention of not giving him an education to qualify him for the exercise of that authority which she meant to retain in her own hands. Under these circumstances, the Proclamation further said, the British Government deemed it necessary and proper to declare publicly in the first place that it considered the claim set up by Baizabai to be no less contrary to law and justice than it was at variance with Hindu customs and usage. Secondly, the British Government recognised Jankojirao alone as a sovereign of Sindhia State; and lastly, it would regard as null and void all public documents and sanads which were not issued in his name and sealed with his seal. This Proclamation the Resident proposed to publish in the event of Baizabai's non-compliance with the demands of the British Government viz., adoption of the Maharaja's seal and allowing the Resident to have a free and unreserved intercourse with the Maharaja. This, the Resident informed Baizabai should be taken by her as a 'warning'. Immediately after his conversation with the Bai, the Resident sought a 'private interview' with the Maharaja in order to ascertain the nature of his ill-treatment by the Bai. This interview with the Maharaja was sought suddenly by the Resident so that there would have 'no tampering' with the boy, nor 'any intimidation used'. But the Maharaja did not make any complaint to the Resident regarding his ill-treatment by the Regent. 'It was evidently not from diffidence that he did not speak out, if he had any cause of complaint, for there was no diffidence in his manner'.⁴¹ On the contrary, the Resident thought, there was 'occasionally something like

⁴¹ For. Pol. Cons. 23 July 1830, No. 44.

petulance in his mode of expressing himself'. Nor did he show any lack of confidence in the Resident as he must have been aware of unpleasant discussions that had been so long carried on with the Bai on his account. Moreover, the readiness with which the Bai assented to the Resident's request for a private interview with the Maharaja, might have been prompted by the Bai's self-confidence that she was not in any way instrumental in the ill-treatment of the boy. The Resident, therefore, drew the conclusion that the young Maharaja, who was 'extremely forward and intelligent for his years', did not conceive himself to be ill-treated in not having the authority in his own hands.⁴²

After the Resident had assumed a threatening attitude, the Regent gave her assent to the Resident's proposal regarding the adoption of the seal. Not being undismayed the Regent wanted that on the day the seal of the Maharaja was to be adopted the Resident should attend the Darbar and state publicly that this circumstance did not affect the rights of Baizabai as Regent which situation she would continue to hold until the Maharaja reached the years of discretion. Soon, however, the Bai resented the concessions she had made and she again tried to obtain the sanction of the British Government to her obtaining power for life. She sent to the Resident through Atmaram the draft of a letter to be written to her by the Governor-General in which her authority for life was recognised. Resident Stewart, however, declined transmitting it. Baizabai also prescribed the terms in which the Resident should express himself at the Darbar on the day on which the Maharaja's seal was to be adopted: that the seal of the Maharaja should be adopted merely for the sake of formality; that the power and authority of Baizabai remained in full force; that all should be obedient to her orders; and that those who did not obey her should be punished. But the Resident

⁴² Ibid.

distinctly informed the Bai that if he attended, on the occasion and was called on to speak, he should use the words agreed on at interview viz., "that the adoption of the seal did not affect her powers as Regent, which would continue until the Maharaja reached the years of discretion." At this the Bai proposed that the Resident should express only the first part of the sentence, that was that he should state generally that the adoption of seal did not affect the Bai's powers as Regent, without adverting to the period when those powers would cease. This also the Resident declined but he said that the Bai might, if she thought fit, go through the ceremony of being called upon to say anything on the subject, or indeed without the Resident's attendance at the Darbar on the occasion.⁴³ This suggestion was accepted by the Bai. On June 27, 1830, when the adoption of the Maharaja's seal was publicly announced at the Darbar, the Resident abstained from the ceremony.

Thus, though the Bai adopted the Maharaja's seal, the question regarding mutual authority of both the Regent and the young Maharaja was left undecided. This naturally led to the speculation among the chiefs at Gwalior as to the next course of action to be adopted by the British Government. Those who were opposed to the Bai's rule tried to sound the new Resident Cavendish. From their very approach to the subject, the Resident found that they desired the British Government to acknowledge the Maharaja as the real ruler of the state when he would arrive at the years of discretion. The Resident preserved silence as he had not received any instruction on the subject. He, however, stated his views to the Governor-General that if the British Government did not intend to interfere to settle the question of the mutual authority of both the Bai and the Maharaja, it should, cautiously and by degrees, explain itself with the view of setting all matters at rest; for silence on the part of the British Government, the Resident apprehended, might occasion anarchy and

43 For. Pol. Cons. 23 July 1830, No. 46.

confusion and keep up the spirit and hopes of a party looking with anxiety to the period when the British should interpose for the removal of the Bai to make way for the Maharaja's accession.⁴⁴ Governor-General Bentinck, however, saw no immediate necessity for mootng the question, viz., what course the British Government would pursue upon the Maharaja's coming to years of majority. Presumably he also felt no urge to assert the Maharaja's claim to the authority and the power of the state. Moreover, while matters proceeded peaceably under the existing administration, the Governor-General felt no compulsion for any interference, and the premature agitation of questions of possible occurrence as referred to by the Resident would only have the tendency to unsettle men's minds and encourage mischievous intrigues'.⁴⁵

The Maharaja felt sore at the manners in which the British Government left the question of the mutual authority of the Bai and himself to be decided by itself. In October, 1832, he managed to escape from the palace and sought refuge with the Resident asserting that he did not consider his life safe from the insolence of his guards and from the machination of the Bai. With some difficulty the Resident effected a reconciliation between the Bai and the Maharaja, and succeeded in persuading the latter to return to the palace. In December of the same year, when Governor-General Bentinck visited Gwalior, the Maharaja met him and gave vent to his feelings against the Bai on the ground of her ill-treatment of him and the design she entertained of adopting a relative of her own as the successor to the throne of Sindhia to his exclusion. He represented that he was grown up and possessed capacity to assume the reins of the Government. He, therefore, urged the Governor-General to place him at once on the musnad which he claimed as the adopted successor

44 For. Pol. Cons. 5 March 1832, Nos. 56 & 57.

45 For. Pol. Cons. 5 March 1832, No. 58.

of Daulatrao Sindhia and acknowledged as such by the Company's Government.⁴⁶

Lord Bentinck tried to settle the conflicting claims between the Regent and the young Maharaja with reference to two points, viz; the rights of Jankojirao Sindhia, and the obligations of the British Government. The Governor-General admitted that Jankoji undoubtedly possessed the same right of succession to the Gwalior Raj as he would have possessed had he been the lawful begotten son of Daulatrao Sindhia, and that as he had attained the age required by Hindu law and usage to perfect that right, his claim to the full powers of the state should be recognised. With regard to the obligation of the Company's Government to interfere on behalf of the Maharaja to enforce his claim to the musnad of Gwalior, the Governor-General admitted that the Company's Government had urged the propriety of an adoption, that it approved and sanctioned the adoption of Jankojirao and that it urged the Regent to use the seal of the Maharaja in all public transactions. "So far", said the Governor-General, "we decidedly interfered, but this was an interference exercised exclusively for the good of the country and according to what we conceived to be the wishes of the people".⁴⁷ The Governor-General found an additional reason for this interference in the dying declaration of Daulatrao Sindhia who had begged that the Company's Government would do what it deemed advisable. Therefore, it had interfered so far as to take measures for preserving 'the integrity of the raj and preventing the evils of a disputed succession'. But it was now 'by no means clear' to the Governor-General that in interfering in the present case of settling the conflicting claims of the Regent and the Maharaja, the Company's Government would be acting in unison with the wishes or in furtherance of the benefit of the people. Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia, 'though clever lad, was violent and very little fit to be trusted with the reins of Government'. Indeed, as the Governor-General confessed, the adoption of the boy was 'an unluckily interference' on the part

⁴⁶ C.H. Philips, The Correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, Vol. II Letter No. 531, p. 965.

⁴⁷ ibid, Letter No. 555, p. 1006

of the Company's Government.⁴⁸ The Regent's rule, on the other hand, was far more beneficial to the people and to the state as a whole. "The country", the Governor-General recorded in his minute of February 22, 1833, "seemed prosperous and flourishing, the rule of the Bai firm, able, and for a native administration, just and, so far I could ascertain there was not even an inconsiderable party opposed to her interests". Therefore, so long as Baizabai ruled to the content of her subjects and to the satisfaction of the Company's Government, the Governor-General could not find any justification for British interference to effect a change in the head of affairs at Gwalior. He, therefore, decided to leave the question of the two conflicting claims between the Maharaja and the Bai 'to the country to decide'.⁴⁹ For the present, however, the Governor-General hoped by persuasive eloquence to both parties to avoid any disturbance. He told the Maharaja that the British Government would not interfere to place him in full powers but that the Regent would not be allowed to adopt anyone else to his supersession, provided he conducted himself in conformity to her wishes and abstained from usurping power by overthrowing her trammels before the time arrived for his being elevated to the government of the state. In a separate conference with Baizabai, the Governor-General asked her to treat the young Maharaja with kindness and not to cherish any harsh or resentful feelings towards him.⁵⁰ The Governor-General was, however, not very sanguine whether the peace between the parties could thus be preserved for long. 'A storm seemed to threaten',⁵¹ remarked the Governor-General.

48 C.H. Philips, Op. cit., Letter No. 531, p 965.

49 C.H. Philips, Op. cit., Letter No. 555, p 1006.

50 Bentinck Papers, Portland Collection, Nottingham University, PW.Jf.2911.

51 C.H. Philips, Op. cit., Letter No. 531, p 965.

CHAPTER - V

THE CIVIL WAR, 1833 : FALL OF BAIZABAI

In the summer of 1833 there was a widespread rumour at Gwalior that Baizabai's rule would soon come to an end. Since her assumption of the office of the Regent, there had been a persistent opposition to her rule by a section of the Sindhia's prominent chiefs. The Bai was determined to reform the Government, and to augment the revenue of the state. The farmers of the districts had been asked to increase their payments or to give up their leases; some of them were removed and their districts given over in amini to one Shah Abul Hussain, who had risen to Bai's favour. Gangadhar Appa, the manager of Mandasore and the adjoining tracts, was seized for having made wealth allegedly by illegal means and made to disgorge a part of it.¹ In 1829 Baizabai appointed as her finance minister Raoji Trimbak. He had been trained by Tantia Jog, a famous diplomat of Indore who had ably served the Holkar's Government for sometime. When appointed by Baizabai as her minister, he exhibited his skill as a revenue administrator. But the banking group headed by Maniram refused to advance money to the Gwalior Government on the revenue assignments as they regarded Raoji Trimbak as an interloper from another court and viewed the measures introduced by the new finance minister as prejudicial to the interests of the money lenders.² Again, a section of the prominent chiefs at Gwalior, including the Bai's brother Hindurao, was opposed to the continuance of the Regency as she appointed her favourites to the high offices of the state to the exclusion of the senior

1 For. Pol. Cons. 13 September 1828, No. 46.

2 For. Pol. Cons. 10 July 1829, No. 39.

and respectable chiefs of the state. In 1829 Hindurao had a quarrel³ with Baizabai over this issue, and since then both the brother and the sister had been cold to each other. In 1831, several plans were made to overthrow the rule of the Bai and place the Maharaja in full power of the state. These plans proposed by Ramrao Phalke, the Commandant of Sindhia's Paga Horse, were presented to Resident Major Low through Mir Ahmed Ali and Mir Salamat Ali, vakils from the Raja of Jhansi.⁴ Mir Ahmed told the Resident that Ramrao and several other prominent chiefs were extremely disgusted at the state of things at Gwalior, that they disliked being governed by a woman who

3 One day at the darbar Baizabai's favourite servant Itu Paolia sat behind Bapu Patel, a respectable person and a dependant of Hindurao. Itu said something which gave offence to Bapu and the latter half drew his sword and said to him "you black-guard, shoe carrier, how do you dare to joke with me? I will cut you in two". Hindurao's intervention put an end to the matter, but Itu Paolia, complained to the Bai, who ordered Hindurao to send Bapu Patil away to the Deccan. Soon after this Hindurao went to Gohad. On his return he went one day to the palace at the time when the chiefs were present paying their obeisance to the Regent. He ordered everybody out except Raoji and then charged Baizabai alleging that she was bringing ruin and disgrace both on the state and herself by lavishing all her favour and confidence on 'a parcel of rascally back-guards'. He added that no respectable person could stay at the Court under such circumstances, and that if she went on in the same way he should be obliged to go away to some place ten or twelve coss off. Hindurao then went to the public darbar where he repeated the same kind of language for sometime and then went home. After this incident Hindurao, though he had not ceased going to the darbar, did not hold any communication with the Bai.
(For. Pol. Cons. 10 July 1829, No. 39, Para 3).

4 It was not an uncommon practice at Indian courts where there were two parties in the palace, for vakils from other states to make communications to the Resident from opposite parties.

was both tyrannical by nature and habits, and that they feared that the Bai and her Malwa minister Raoji Trimbak would soon ruin the state. The disgruntled chiefs, therefore, had urged Ramrao to take the lead in effecting a 'revolution' by confining the Bai to her own house and placing their own natural sovereign in full power aided by such ministers as the British Government might nominate. A very large sum of money was due to Ramrao for the pay of the Paga Horse, and this was to be the excuse for one of his principal adherents to proceed with some of his followers to that part of the palace inhabited by Baizabai. They were to make a great clamour for a settlement of their arrears and thus engage the attention of the Bai and her minister, while Ramrao himself and other chiefs were to surround the separate building where the Maharaja lived and to carry him off on horseback to the Residency. There the Maharaja would himself tell the Resident all his grievances and would ask him to appoint any minister the Resident pleased. The Jhansi wakil assured the Resident that there would be no general disturbance and that the whole matter would be completed in a few hours with the support of the Resident who could be relied upon as the accredited representative of the British Government to put a stop to the state of things at the Darbar which threatened the ruin of Sindhia's dominions.

Besides the above scheme, another had been thought of by the conspirators. It was to effect a revolution without the Resident's assistance in the event of Resident refusing it. However, this second plan was not matured as it might cause much bloodshed which the chiefs wished to avoid.

The Resident told the Jhansi vakils that the schemes of effecting a revolution at Gwalior had his 'decided disapprobation in toto'. If Ramrao were to carry off the Maharaja from his palace in the manner he had proposed

and bring him in the Residency, the Resident would conceive the act to be a most unworthy one, and to be entirely that of Rāmrao himself, for objects of his own. Under the circumstances, the Resident would not receive either the one or the other at the Residency. When Mir Ahmed Ali asked Resident Low whether the British Government did not wish the Maharaja to be better treated, he replied that the British Government had no wishes on the subject one way or the other, for the Resident was confident that the Maharaja was not ill-treated. At this the vakil remarked that the Resident was mistaken in his view, and the former deemed it useless to discuss the subject any further as he found the Resident determined not to favour the Maharaja or the chiefs.⁵

Matters came to a head after Bentinck's visit at Gwalior. Reports were circulated by Baizabai's supporters that she had received full authority from the Governor-General to act towards the Maharaja according to her pleasure, if he did not conduct himself to her satisfaction. The Bai's position was, however, somewhat weakened by the death of Raoji Trimbak in January 1833 and that of her private and confident servant Bhim in the month of May of the same year. All the chiefs hostile to Bai's rule, and having different objects to achieve at the court demanded that as the Maharaja would be attaining within a few months the age of maturity, arrangements should be made for terminating the Regency and placing the Maharaja at the head of the Government.⁶ These demands and counter-demands by both the parties strained the relations between the Regent and the Maharaja so much that they invited Resident Cavendish to settle their differences. They proposed to the Resident an arrangement whereby the Maharaja was to receive a separate jahgir from the Bai on the British Government becoming guarantee for the quiet and submissive conduct of the

5 For. Pol. Cons. 4 March 1831, No. 13.

6 For. Pol. Cons. 13 June 1833, No. 6 & 8.

Maharaja during the lifetime of the Bai.⁷ Until the Governor-General's assent to this arrangement could be secured, both the Bai and the Maharaja were to remain at peace. Immediately, however, after Resident's departure from the palace, the Bai put restraints upon the Maharaja's movement. The rumour also went out that the Resident had received four or five lacs of rupees from the Bai in return for which he had given his consent to this proceeding of the Regent. The Maharaja's detention caused agitation in the capital and Baizabai, put in a critical position, once again invited the Resident to the court for consultation. Cavendish, however, expressed his inability to pay a visit to the Regent as long as the Maharaja was in a state of confinement. At the same time, however, the Resident advised the Bai to reconcile herself to her brother Hindurao, who was regarded as the principal conspirator against her rule, and thus to frustrate all attempts at overthrowing her regime. Accordingly, Baizabai held a long private conference with Hindurao and it was through his efforts that the Maharaja was reconciled to the Bai. On June 13, 1833, the Maharaja appeared in the public Darbar at the request of Hindurao to show that he was not in a state of confinement.⁸ On June 21, Resident Cavendish accompanied by his assistant Lt. Ross visited the Darbar to ascertain whether the Maharaja had any intention or plot against the Bai's authority, and both of them were 'fully satisfied' of the Maharaja's resolve against her power.

The Bai held the view that what had now commenced would end in a disturbance and, therefore, she repeatedly urged the Resident for advice. Cavendish told her that there was no reason or necessity to consult him, for her authority was acknowledged as supreme. The British Government, the Resident said, was merely pledged for the Maharaja's succession after the Regent and for his life and liberty, provided he conducted himself quietly and

7 For. Pol. Cons. 13 June 1833, No. 13.

8 For. Pol. Cons. 28 June 1833, No. 41.

peaceably. When the Bai told that the Maharaja had been conspiring against her authority and asked what was to be done, the Resident replied that if the Bai was convinced of the Maharaja's duplicity, she might act as he pleased and that she need not consult the Resident or wait for advice or instructions from the British Government for the reply would inevitably be 'you are Malik'. The Resident only requested her that she would not say publicly that the British Government or the Resident had recommended the measures which she desired to adopt to crush real or imaginary conspiracies. Baizabai, however, repeated that she would not act without special instructions or advice either from the British Government or the Resident, and she endeavoured in many ways to elicit some counsel from the Resident for the Maharaja's detention under restraint or a guarantee for his conduct, if allowed to go and travel whenever he pleased. The Resident, however, expressed his inability to offer any advice on this matter and told the Bai that in the internal administration of Gwalior and its court the Resident had no authority whatsoever. He repeated that the Bai was the Malik and that she could act as he pleased; she had confined the Maharaja and could confine him again if she thought it proper. "You have", the Resident told the Bai, "full authority in all such matters, I neither recommend nor condemn such a measure and my only wish is that the camp (Gwalior Government) should understand the policy of the British Government."⁹ The Regent, still urged the Resident to repeat to the Maharaja the advices given to him by Governor-General Bentinck during the latter's visit to Gwalior. In order to satisfy the Bai, the Resident agreed to do as desired by her in the presence of four persons to be selected by her. But the Maharaja was opposed to the presence of any of the Bai's nominee during the conversation between him and the Resident, because such had never been the custom. The Maharaja, however, asked Cavendish to communicate the Bai in

9 For. Pol. Cons. 11 July 1833, No. 46.

writing the advices to be given to him by the Resident. Then the Resident told the Maharaja that he should be grateful to the Bai for having been adopted and placed on the throne by her and that he should be obedient and respectful towards her as had been fully explained to him by the Governor-General during the latter's visit to Gwalior. The Resident also advised the Maharaja not to believe those persons who had told him that as the British Government had placed him on the throne it would favour his cause. The British Government, the Resident said, had promised the succession to the Maharaja after the Bai and would strictly adhere to this promise, but if the Maharaja raised conspiracies or disturbances and failed in his attempt, the Bai had full power and authority to adopt necessary measures according to her will and pleasure. To this the Maharaja replied that he perfectly understood what the Resident had stated, and that he had never in any way failed and never would fail in obedience to the Bai's command, but all he requested was her favour and kindness.¹⁰ Baizabai was now satisfied with the compromise brought about by the Resident between her and the Maharaja. However, it seemed that both the Maharaja and the Bai desired to put a stop of their recurring differences, by a permanent settlement and, therefore, they enquired of the Resident whether their earlier proposal for settling their differences, viz., that the Maharaja should receive from the Bai a large jahgir on the British Government becoming guarantee for the quiet and submissive conduct of the Maharaja during the lifetime of the Bai, had been approved by the Governor-General. While the Resident thought it proper to discourage in some degree their too sanguine expectations in this regard, he informed the Governor-General that if the British Government did not assent to guarantee the proposed arrangement, it would be impossible for him to preserve peace and harmony in the camp. For, he was

10 A letter from Cavendish to Baiza Bai dated 21 June, 1833.

(For. Pol. Cons. 11 July 1833, No. 46.)

put in an embarrassing situation by the importunities of the Bai for his advice which could not be given without causing ruin to her or to the Maharaja. If the Resident recommended her to give the Maharaja full liberty, he would undoubtedly take advantage of it, if on the other hand, Maharaja's restraint was advised the Resident would certainly do injustice to him. In order to avoid the importunities of the Bai for advice, the Resident expressed his desire to the Governor-General to retire to Dholepur on the pretext of torrid season at Gwalior.¹¹ Although the Governor-General deplored the dissension of the Maharaja and the Bai, he thought it impolitic to interfere on such an occasion and therefore, refused to make the British Government stand guarantee for any adjustment between the two parties.¹²

It was the bankruptcy of Baizabai's statecraft that precipitated the crisis. Instead of glossing over the faults of the conspirators and forgiving them, she adopted some desperate measures which drove them into open rebellion. Several persons, including the Maharaja's confidential servant Birju, were apprehended and the names of conspirators were elicited from them. The ammunition of the artillery and Allif Khan's troops was taken away from them, which was regarded by the Resident as 'a most ill-judged measure'. For the conspirators knew what would be their fate and 'resolved on anticipating the Bae'.¹³ The Maharaja also could not reconcile himself permanently to the Bai. He was extremely dejected on account of Hindurao's reconciliation with the Bai, for Hindurao always proclaimed himself and was considered by the Maharaja the most faithful defender of his right and interests, and had 'insinuated himself into the Maharaja's confidence'.¹⁴ Although the Maharaja was allowed to ride out, he was always accompanied by Trimbak Dada, one of the trustworthy followers of the Bai.

In the evening of July 8, 1833, the Maharaja went to Col. Jacob and his

11 For. Pol. Cons. 11 July 1833, No. 46, para 12.

12 For. Pol. Cons. 11 July 1833, No. 47.

13 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26, para 37.

14 For. Pol. Cons. 18 July 1833; No. 47.

brigades who were in charge of guarding the main gate of the palace, but Jacob was afraid to take up arms in support of the Maharaja who then went to the late Maharaja's Chatri. But the doors of the Chatri were closed against him and he sat down in the outer square all the night. At dawn of July 9, he proceeded towards the Residency. On receiving this intelligence, Cavendish left his quarter, went to Ross's bungalow and sent a servant to the advancing Maharaja to say that the Resident was not at home. But the Maharaja stated his determination to remain at the Residency until the Resident returned. When this was reported to the Resident, he directed the doors of the Residency to be closed and, unseen by the Maharaja and his party, proceeded about 5 A.M. to the palace, and from there he had it intimated to the Maharaja that the Resident could not receive him at the Residency but would pay his visit at the palace. But the Resident received a note from Ross to the effect that Doctor Panton had determined on inviting the Maharaja to his house. When the Resident communicated to the Bai the contents of the note, she remarked in an enraged voice "what right has Dr. Panton to interfere in such matters?" The Resident then began to write a note to Ross asking him to prohibit Dr. Panton from inviting the Maharaja to his house. As Dr. Panton was about to leave the Residency and was extremely obstinate, he might not either receive the Resident's note in time or comply with it. At this Bai requested the Resident to return immediately to the Residency and to send back the Maharaja with as little delay as possible.¹⁵ The Bai added that she loved the "foolish boy" and would not call him to account for his folly. The Resident, however, did not request the Bai to take the Maharaja back. The Resident desired to return to the Residency to prevent Dr. Panton from committing the Resident and the British Government, for had the Maharaja been allowed to remain a day at the Residency or Dr. Panton's house, the whole Gwalior army would have joined the Maharaja on the supposition that the doctor had received him at the behest of the Resident.¹⁶ On reaching the Residency, Cavendish found the Maharaja seated on a

15 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26.

16 For. Pol. Cons. 5 December 1833, No. 81.

carpet in the shade of a wall where he had remained for seven hours. The Resident escorted him into the Residency - where the Maharaja told Cavendish that unless the Bai guaranteed his life and liberty he would not return to her. To this the Resident replied that he could neither insist upon nor recommend the Bai giving such a guarantee. The Maharaja had failed in his attempt to usurp the Bai's authority and if he had lost his life in that attempt, the Bai would not have been to blame. If now the Bai was determined to confine the Maharaja, or to set him aside and make a new adoption, the Resident said, the British Government would not interfere to prevent her.¹⁷ When the Maharaja asked the Resident what he ought to do now, the latter replied that he should return to the palace, throw himself at his mother's feet and endeavour to pacify her by giving her a solemn assurance that he would never again make any attempt to subvert her authority.

The Maharaja agreed to this and before going away solemnly swore on his own accord by Nath Sahab that he would be guided by the Resident's advice in all matters.¹⁸ The Resident then reported to Jaising Bhau, one of the Bai's most confidential servants, what had just passed between him and the Maharaja. He then asked Jaising to accompany the Maharaja to the palace and acquaint the Bai with all that had taken place at the Residency.

The Maharaja, on his return to the palace, threw himself at the Bai's feet, confessed that he had made four attempts against her power, but now solemnly swore by Nath Sahab never to do so again. He then returned to his room from where he had escaped on the evening of 8 July. On the night of 9th the Bahadur Regiment belonging to the Col. Jacob's army was in charge of the palace. On the same night the Burum Regiment of the same army marched towards the palace to rescue the Maharaja. Both the Burum and Bahadur Regiments had sworn not to taste food till the Maharaja had been rescued from the restraint and actually they had fasted

17 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26 para 3.

18 Ibid.

many hours.¹⁹ Faced with the Burum Regiment all on a sudden, the Maharaja suspected that it had been ordered by the Bai to seize and kill him. He, therefore, made an attempt to escape, but was detained by some soldiers who told him that Col. Jacob had sent them for him with the intention of joining him against the Bai.²⁰ At about 4 A.M. of the 10th both the Burum and Bahadur Regiments took the Maharaja out of the palace, and they were immediately joined by all the remaining regiments of Jacob's, the artillery, Aliff Khan's regiments and by the Maratha horsemen. They took the Maharaja to the Phulbag and announced their determination to support his cause against the Bai.²¹

The mutinous troops, next surrounded Baizabai's palace; but by a back door, unknown to the troops, she fled on foot to Hindurao's house. At a meeting there, the men belonging to the Bai's party came to the conclusion that it was impossible to defend her against so overwhelming a force and decided to take shelter at the Residency.²² Accordingly, the Bai sent a messenger with a letter written by herself to the Resident requesting him to visit her immediately at the Hindurao's house. The Resident also received an invitation from the Maharaja to visit him, but considering the unsettled condition of the camp, the Resident considered it advisable not to leave the Residency. The Bai, therefore, decided to move towards the Residency.

Meanwhile, the mutinous troops had posted themselves on the roads to prevent the Bai from reaching the Residency. Although accompanied by a loyal battalion of Colonel Sikander's Brigade, Hindurao, Appa Patankar and other chiefs, she made a detour of about ten coss through the hills to the southward of Gwalior and tried to reach the Residency from the west, her further progress was opposed by a strong body of troops with artillery under the command of Gopal Bhau Sindhia, the latter being ordered to open fire on the Bai if she

19 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26 Para 37.

20 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 28 Para 3.

21 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26 Para 7.

22 Ibid, para 37.

attempted to force her way to the Residency.²³ On finding her advance opposed, Baizabai sent several requests to the Resident to save her and her party from the impending conflict.²⁴

Resident Cavendish dispatched two native officers to the opposing forces desiring them to encamp where they were until the Maharaja and the Resident had a conference. The Resident then requested his assistant Lt. Ross to proceed with all haste to the camp to get a parwana from the Maharaja to Gopal Bhau Sindhia ordering him to allow the Bai to pass unmolested to the Residency. Cavendish also directed Lt. Ross to state to the Maharaja that the Resident's only motive in receiving the Bai at the Residency was to secure her personal safety and that the Resident did not intend in any way to support her, should she endeavour to recover her lost power. Cavendish added that he was aware now that all the troops in camp and most of the chiefs had joined the Maharaja and, therefore, the Resident considered the Bai's seeking an asylum at the Residency as a virtual resignation of her authority.²⁵ The Maharaja, on receiving this communication from the Resident, granted the pass without hesitation. He requested Lt. Ross to return to the Residency and make known to the Resident that nothing was further from his wish than to expose the Bai to any personal risk, that he was willing to grant her a splendid provision of 8 lacs of Rupees per annum during her life and to give her in fact whatever she chose except the Raj'.²⁶ The only request the Maharaja wished to make to the Resident was to abstain from giving the Bai any support should she make an attempt to recover the power which she had just lost.

In the meantime Cavendish had sent Jafir Ali, the Munshi of the Residency,

23 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 28, para 8.

24 Ibid, para 9.

25 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26 para 10.

26 Ibid, para 11.

to the Bai to inform her that the Resident's interference could be merely to save her life and honour provided she would proceed to Benaras or quit the territory of Gwalior. To this the Bai agreed and Cavendish, on the receipt of Lt. Ross's note, proceeded to visit the Bai. He found her in a cow-house in the village of Jaksoli, about a mile from the Residency compound. The Resident was deeply affected at the Bai's sudden fall and desperate situation and it was settled through Hindurao that she would be granted asylum on the understanding that she had resigned the Government and that she would proceed to a pilgrimage.²⁷ Then the Resident escorted the Bai and Hindurao to the tents pitched for them within the Residency. Col. Sikander's troops and guns encamped at some distance from the Residency.

After the Bai had been granted asylum into the Residency, Cavendish went to the camp of the Maharaja and acknowledged him as the Head of the Gwalior Government. This did not, however, satisfy the soldiers who had risen in favour of the Maharaja. The whole camp suspected the Resident, for he was considered attached to the Bai because he "had looked up to her as the Head of the Gwalior Government, was on very intimate terms with her, and had once or twice prevented her fall."²⁸ On July 11, 1833, reports were circulated and generally credited that the troops had resolved on proceeding to the Residency to seize the Bai in defiance of the Maharaja's orders and that they had confined their officers for dissuading them from such violence. The Maharaja invited the Resident for advice. Cavendish hastily went to the Phulbag, pacified the soldiers and in the evening of that day accompanied the Maharaja to the palace which was a most public acknowledgement of his supremacy. It set all the alarms and apprehensions of the soldiers and camp at rest. This

27 Ibid, para 14.

28 Ibid, para 40.

was also considered by the Resident the best manner of proclaiming to the world the nature of the protection granted by him to the Bai.²⁹

The Resident was, however, anxious for the Bai's departure from the Residency; for he apprehended that commotions might take place because of the Bai's presence at the Residency and that an attack might be made upon the Residency for her apprehension. The whole camp was⁰ apposed to and detested the Bai, but the Resident's view was that a counter-revolution might be attempted in her favour within six months. Should such a revolution take place and the voice of the nation be in her favour, the Resident expected that her return would not be opposed by the British Government. She had been granted only asylum in the Residency, but the British Government could not connive at her attempt to recapture power at Gwalior by supporting her with British troops or by allowing her to raise an army while residing at the Residency. But if the people of Gwalior would welcome her return after she had left the Residency, the British Government should not oppose her departure. She had been told categorically by the Resident that she must not make use of the British sanctuary as a rendezvous either for regaining her lost power or for returning to the Capital.³⁰ Therefore, before he left the Residency for the camp to accompany the Maharaja to the palace, the Resident had instructed Lt. Ross to go to the Bai and explain to her the necessity for her immediately setting out to Dholepur, for the troops might persist in their intention of seizing her. The Resident had also instructed Ross to accompany the Bai to Dholepur and remain in attendance upon her there. Accordingly, Ross delivered the message in person to the Bai and also added that the Resident had determined to remain with the Maharaja instead of returning to the Residency as she had declined moving away and as he had not the means of

29 Ibid, para 20.

30 Ibid, para 38-39.

defending her. On hearing this, the Bai broke out in a violent strain against the people who had betrayed her. She, however, attributed the recent revolution in a great measure to her own conduct in restraining from adopting precautions for her own security for fear of offending the British Government which might have accused her of being severe and tyrannical. She, however, assented to go to Dholepur under the escort of Ross.³¹

In the morning of July 12, 1833 the day fixed for the Bai's departure, Cavendish paid her a visit when she related her grievances against the Resident and the British Government. She declared that she had maintained strict friendship with the British Government, fully expecting its support in time of need and now was the time to evince its friendship for her. The Governor-General, she added, had also declared that the Maharaja should be her successor on her death. As she was still alive, the British Government should protect her rights and it was on this assumption that she had taken an asylum at the Residency fully expecting that the Governor-General would send instructions to the Resident to reinstate the Bai in full authority and to punish the mutinous troops. Resident Cavendish replied that the Bai's friendship for the British Government was duly valued by all the British authorities but certainly it was not based on any public or secret understanding of supporting her cause against internal enemies. Nor was there any guarantee for the Bai's supremacy during her life. As to the asylum granted to the Bai at the Residency, the Resident said, it was done only to save her honour, the lives of her relations and followers and not on an understanding of reinstating her at Gwalior. The Resident expressed his conviction that non-interference in such matters would be strictly observed by the British Government.³²

31 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26.

32 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 35.

It began to rain very heavily while the Resident was making conversation with the Bai. The water entered the tent and the Resident solicited the Bai to take shelter within the Residency and to put off her departure for a day to which she agreed. In the evening both the Resident and his Assistant paid the Bai a visit. The Resident regretted her misfortunes and expressed his inability to do more for her than had been done. He acknowledged that the British Government was highly satisfied with her rule and would regret the revolution. Cavendish declared his conviction that the State of Sindhia would not be governed so well by the Maharaja as by the Bai herself. He also added that the system of non-interference pursued by the British Government precluded its interposition in her favour when the whole army had risen up against her; but, the Resident continued, wherever she might fix her abode, the Governor-General and the British authorities would always pay her the greatest attention.³³ These words of the Resident seemed to have set the agitated mind of the Bai at rest. She addressed the Resident as her brother and requested him to take care of her daughter Chimmabai who had been carrying and the grand-daughter Jijabai, both of whom she had left behind at the palace. The Resident promised to look after them and on the 13th Baizabai left for Dholepur. She reached there the next day and took her residence at the house of the British Resident.³⁴

The shelter granted to Baizabai in the Resident's house at Dholepur caused suspicion in the minds of the Maharaja and his supporters as to the future policy of the British Government. They, therefore, desired the Resident to make a public declaration of the British Government's recognition of the Maharaja. In a private interview with the Resident at Balabai's house on July 16, 1833, the Maharaja informed the British representative that Balabai

33 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 26, para 27.

34 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 30.

had acknowledged him as sovereign of the Gwalior State and had desired the chiefs in a public darbar to treat him with due deference and respect and to look upon him henceforth as the successor of the late Daulatrao Sindhia. The Maharaja asked the Resident also to do the same.³⁵ Accordingly, the Resident addressed the assembled civil and military officers and soldiers. He told them that they had unanimously declared in favour of the young Maharaja, immediately acknowledged him as absolute sovereign without waiting for specific instructions from the Governor-General with a view to prevent bloodshed and to dispel any false notion from the mind of the people of Gwalior, as to the objectives of the British policy. Had he waited for specific instruction from his Government, the Resident added, reports would have been circulated that the British Government would interfere in the present case and he had, therefore, accompanied the Maharaja at his invitation on the 11th in the public procession to the palace. At the same time he exerted himself in every way to save the Bai's life and honour without injuring the national interests. He was convinced that the Governor-General would also hail the assumption of the power of the Gwalior Government by Jankajirao with pleasure. After Cavendish had concluded his public speech Balabai desired the Resident to communicate to the Governor-General her request that the British Government would recognise the present Maharaja as the lawful successor of the late Maharaja Daulatrao to the full power of the state.³⁶ This the Resident agreed to do.

One of the reasons advanced by Resident Cavendish for his public declaration of the views and policy of the British Government with regard to the situation arising out of the civil war of 1833 was that he was anxious to secure a suitable provision for Chimnabai, the daughter of late Daulatrao

35 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 36.

36 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 36, para 8.

and Baizabai, and for other members of the royal family.³⁷ Before she left for Dholepur, Baizabai had made a request to the Resident to look after her daughter Chinnabai, and her grand-daughter, Jijabai, whom she had left behind in the palace. Chinnabai was there in an advanced stage of pregnancy and her mother requested the Resident to keep her at the Residency for the present and afterwards send her to Dholepur. The Resident promised to Baizabai to take care of her daughter and grand-daughter and on July 16, after his public acknowledgement of the Maharaja's right to the power of the state, he paid Chinnabai and Jijabai a visit with the permission of the Maharaja. On seeing the Resident, both the ladies cried and related to him the insults heaped on them during the revolution. Chinnabai told the Resident that her servants had been searched whenever they went in or out of the house and only two or three of them were allowed to attend her, and that her wardrobe had been placed under a guard. The Resident asked Chinnabai whether she wished to join her mother. She asked for the Resident's advice in this matter. When the Resident declared his inability to give her any advice, she replied that she was not in a condition to travel as she expected herself to be a mother in four months and the season was unfavourable for her journey to Dholepur. She added that if Jankoji would treat her well and remove the guards placed on her, she would remain in the palace for the present, if not, she would take shelter in the Residency as her mother had written to her to join her or to reside in the Residency. The Resident, it seemed, did not like Chinnabai's plan of taking shelter in the Residency. He told her that the Residency was always at her service but as she and the Maharaja loved each other, she should stay in the palace.³⁸ At this the Bai promptly replied that the Maharaja's conduct to her mother and herself had estranged her

37 Ibid, para 6.

38 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 36, para 15.

affections. Like a thief in the night, the Maharaja had seized on the Government when her mother was asleep. If in a battle the Maharaja had won the power of the State, Chinnabai said, she would have admired him. She, then, asked the Resident what the British Government would do for her mother. When the Resident declared his ignorance in this matter, she observed that as she knew her mother's heart the Resident ought to know the British Government's. Her mother wished the British Government to reinstate her in full authority and she would then willingly resign the State to it. She was anxious to know the attitude of the British Government in this hour of crisis. The Resident still pleaded ignorance and requested her to state what the British Government would do. Chinnabai replied that the British Government would not replace her mother on the throne but would grant her provision of about twelve lacs. At this the Resident applauded Chinnabai's knowledge of the British Government's system and principles. He promised to have all her grievances redressed and to use his influence with the Maharaja for a provision for her. Chinnabai maintained that as the only daughter of the late Maharaja she ought to have half the 'Raj'; but said that jagir of five lacs for herself and another five lacs for her husband would be sufficient for them. She added that she had five and Jijabai two lacs in their palace treasury (jamdahkhanesh), and hoped that the Resident would secure the amount for them from Jankajirao. The Resident promised his best office. Cavendish fondly believed to secure his favour for Chinnabai from the Maharaja who would be too glad to reciprocate the Resident's wishes considering the latter's part in promoting the British Government's recognition of his title to the State.³⁹ Soon, however, the Resident came to regret the Maharaja's conduct to his mother's relations and followers which was 'extremely ungrateful and unfeeling'. He appeared

39 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 36, para 18.

'anxious to disgrace them in every way'.⁴⁰ Previous to the revolution the Maharaja and Chinnabai were friends; afterwards he was disgusted with her as she showed her anguish for her distressed mother. He was anxious to prevail on her to remain in camp and told the Resident to invite her husband Appa Patankar to return to the capital; but the Resident declined compliance. Thereafter, Chinnabai was made virtually a prisoner in the palace. None of her servants had access to her; only the Resident was allowed to visit her. In vain the Resident reasoned with the Maharaja and defended the daughter's attachment for her mother. The Maharaja also refused to give up to Baizabai and her near relations all the treasury claimed by them as their private property. He informed the Resident that the Bai had made over the public funds to bankers in camp, at Benares, Dhar and other places, and also to the treasury (jamdahkhaneh) in the palace, amounting to crores of rupees. These could not be called her private property. The Resident in his despatch to the Governor-General dated July 25, 1833, expressed his view that the Bai, her daughter and near relations should have their private property, though he was aware of the difficulty to draw a proper distinction between private and public property and to give satisfaction to all the parties concerned.⁴¹ On July 27, however, the Resident met the Maharaja and advised him to restore to Baizabai her private property and the servants belonging to her household and also to remove the guards stationed to keep a watch over private property of Chinnabai and Jijabai. The Resident told the Maharaja that unless the Maharaja complied with his suggestions, the Governor-General would make a delay in sending an answer to the letter which had been written to him by the Maharaja on his assumption to the sovereign power of the Gwalior State. The Resident also suggested to the Governor-General that the reply to the said

40 For. Pol. Cons. 3 October 1833, No. 14, para 13.

41 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 43.

letter of the Maharaja should be delayed or be kept in abeyance by the Resident himself to be delivered to the Maharaja only on the restoration of the private property to Baizabai, Chimmabai and Jijabai.⁴²

The Governor-General, however, did not think it proper to adopt the suggestion made by the Resident. To hesitate about congratulating the Maharaja on his accession to the supreme power at Gwalior would, the Governor-General added, be contrary to the principles all along professed by the British Government, while it was very much doubtful whether the object contemplated by the Resident would be secured by procrastination. Accordingly, on August 8, Lord Bentinck addressed a letter to Jankojirao, in which after congratulating the Maharaja on the happy event of his accession to power, the Governor-General endeavoured to impress him with a sense of his duty towards the Bai. "My feelings on this occasion", said the Governor-General, "are not those of unqualified joy. I rejoice at your prosperity, but I feel for the reverse of future to which your honoured mother the Bai has been subjected". The Governor-General added that the Bai was an old and faithful ally of the British Government who never yet consented to abandon its friends without making some effort in their behalf.⁴³ The British Government would always continue to feel a deep interest in the welfare of the Bai and hence, the Governor-General's opinion of the Maharaja as a ruler and a man would in a great measure be formed by the mode in which the latter might treat the Bai and her relatives. "My feelings of friendship towards yourself will necessarily in a great measure be regulated by the degree of liberality you may evince towards that lady", the Governor-General concluded.⁴⁴ The Governor-General also tried to appease Baizabai. She could hardly reconcile herself

42 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 44.

43 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 46.

44 Ibid.

to the sudden change of her fortune. When acting-Resident Ross, who had accompanied her to Dholepur, informed her that before releasing her people kept under restraint at Gwalior, the Maharaja would require her to give a promise never again to assume charge of the Gwalior Government though invited to do so by the whole camp, she replied that she would rather die than compromise her honour by giving such a promise.⁴⁵ In a long letter to Bentinck, she narrated the circumstances leading to her removal from Gwalior, for which she held the Resident greatly responsible; and she cherished a sanguine hope that the Governor-General would be pleased to afford her assistance and restore her to the Government of Gwalior.⁴⁶ Bentinck, however, expressed his inability to interfere to regain for her the powers which she had enjoyed at Gwalior and which was now conferred upon Jankojirao by 'popular voice'. The Governor-General, however, advised her to reconcile herself to the changes that had taken place at Gwalior, and to compose her thoughts to the quiet contemplation of the state of things which had been established by the accession to power of her adopted son. 'True greatness', the Governor-General told her, 'consists in bearing every condition with undisturbed equanimity.' He further said that should the Bai prefer to reside in the territory of the British Government, every attention would be paid to her dignity and comfort.⁴⁷

It seemed, however, that the Governor-General's sermons had little effect in assuaging the wounded sentiment of Baizabai. She fully availed herself of the concession granted to her by the Governor-General regarding her residence within the British territory, encamped at Agra, not very far from Gwalior, and from there she carried on intrigues against Jankojirao. Since the assumption of the reins of the Government in his own hands the

45 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 32. •

46 For. Pol. Cons. 5 September 1833, No. 36. •

47 For. Pol. Cons. 26 September 1833, No. 10. •

young Maharaja had been facing serious difficulties. He selected his ministers from those persons who had been regarded as the most confidential followers of Baizabai, but who betrayed her interests during the late mutiny. Gangadhar Ballal, better known as Dada Khasgiwala, was made the Prime minister by the Maharaja. He had served the Bai as the interpreter between her and the Resident. Appa Chitnis was made the Secretary to the Prime-minister. Bhaui Shastri, the spiritual teacher of the Maharaja, was another member of his ministry. Baizabai had the greatest confidence in him and she had employed him 'to gain and betray the Maharaja's confidence'. But the Shastri divulged her secrets and had been the principal conspirator against her rule.⁴⁸ Maniram, the banker, who had all along been opposed to the Bai's rule, was another member of the Maharaja's ministry. Ramrao Phalke, the head of the Maratha horsemen and Madhuraao, commandant of the artillery, who had been removed by the Bai from their posts, were also included in the present ministry.

Soon, however, a clash between this ministry and those soldiers, who had seated the Maharaja on the throne, ensued. Some of the soldiers had not received their pay for twenty-seven months and all the Brigades for fourteen months. The Maharaja had promised them to pay up all arrears on assuming the supreme power of the state. On July 28 the soldiers put the members of the Council of ministers under restraint and demanded payment of all arrears. Even the Maharaja was debarred from all communications with them.⁴⁹ Under the circumstances, the Maharaja consulted Resident Cavendish and the latter advised him to fulfil whatever promise he had made to the soldiers and to resist resolutely any new or unjust demand. The Resident also advised the Maharaja to make arrangements for monthly payments for, he added, the troops

48 For. Pol. Cons. 8 August 1833, No. 37.

49 For. Pol. Cons. 3 October 1833, No. 14, para 3.

were devoted to him and would see the impropriety of urging new demands when the Maharaja was paying their arrears and making arrangements for the punctual payment of their pay. To this the Maharaja agreed and promised to the agitated soldiers to pay in full their arrears. The soldiers withdrew their dharna (restraint) from the ministers.⁵⁰

.. Shortly after this, Bapu Baolia's battalions refused to receive a commandant appointed by the Maharaja. The Maharaja, as already advised by the Resident, resisted the demand of the soldiers. He told them that he had paid all their arrears for twenty-seven months and they must obey his orders or leave the service. The battalions concerned bowed down before the resolute determination of the Maharaja and agreed to be commanded by Bapu Baolia.⁵¹ Early in August 1833, however, a serious mutiny broke out in Gwalior. About two months ago the Maharaja had given written promises to retain the Burum and Bahadur Regiments as palace guards and never again to place them under Col. Jacob's command. The Colonel had intrigued against Baizabai, but he was bought over by her just before the Burums and Bahadurs, then acting as the palace guards, effected the release of the Maharaja.

However, the asylum granted to the Bai in the Residency engendered a belief in the mind of Jacob that the British Government would take up her cause and, therefore, the Colonel was emboldened enough to declare his intention to cut off the ears and noses of the men of the Burum and Bahadur Regiments for acting without his orders. When, however, the Resident sent off Baizabai to Dholepur and acknowledged Jankoji as the Head of the Gwalior Government, Col. Jacob changed side and declared his allegiance to the Maharaja. But the Burums and Bahadurs exposed him to the Maharaja and the latter gave them the

50 Ibid., para 6.

51 Ibid., para 5.

promise as stated above.⁵² The Ministry however, prevailed on the Maharaja to break his promise to the two Regiments by ordering them immediately to place themselves under Col. Jacob's command, march the next day to Malwa or deliver up their arms and guns. To enforce compliance with these orders the ministry surrounded the two Regiments in which state they remained from the 3rd to 7th August. On the 7th, however, the whole of Jacob's Brigade joined the Burum and Bahadur Regiments. The Artillery also refused to act against them. Their view was that the said Regiments had rescued the Maharaja from his confinement at the risk of their lives and placed him on the throne; and for such services the artillery could not certainly cut them up "merely to please a ministry of Dukhnee Brahmins". If the Burum and Bahadur Regiments were really guilty of any offence, then the Maharaja himself should order them to deliver up their arms and if they refuse to do so the artillery would then act against them. After that the artillerymen would themselves deliver up their own arms.⁵³

On the very day the whole army rose into revolt, Resident Cavendish received an express message from the Maharaja to pay a visit to the Darbar and use his good offices in settling the problems of the army. But Cavendish refused to comply with the Maharaja's request for he doubted his 'ability to quell the disturbance'. He, however, urged the propriety of an adjustment with the disaffected soldiers through the Ministry which had brought the Government into such troubles and danger. In a postscript he added that if no one else could save the state, he would exert himself, to do so "merely

52 For. Pol. Cons. 3 October 1833, No. 24, para 19.

53 For. Pol. Cons. 3 October 1833, No. 24, para 6.

The Brahmins and Marathas were originally from the south, hence they were dubbed Dukhnee or Deccanee; while most of soldiers were from the Lucknow territory and hence they were called 'Poorbee Sepais', i.e. soldiers who came from the Eastern parts of India.

out of friendship for the Maharaja".⁵⁴ On August 8, 1833, again, the Resident received two most urgent and pressing written invitations, one from the Prime Minister Dada Khasgiwala and the other from the Maharaja for paying a visit to the Darbar. Ramrao Tantia, a noble of the Court, was also deputed to report fully to the Resident the state of affairs at the capital. Still Cavendish declined compliance; for the matter was 'purely of a domestic nature' and, therefore, his presence was unnecessary.⁵⁵ Besides, the whole army was in arms and the road to Residency was shut up. After many entreaties, however, the Resident agreed to exert himself solely with the view of preventing much bloodshed and of saving the lives of thousands, 'perhaps among them that of His Highness'. 'Humanity and a trust in Providence for aid in so good cause', the Resident added, 'made him resolve to risk a little'.⁵⁶ Besides, before he paid the visit to the Darbar in the evening of the 8th, Cavendish had ascertained the public feelings towards himself through the messengers employed by him for the purpose and was convinced that all parties anxiously expected him under an idea that matters would be satisfactorily settled by the Resident.

On enquiry into the present disturbances and after a private audience with the Maharaja, Cavendish was convinced that the discontent among the soldiers arose solely from the conduct of the present ministry. The Resident 'was not long in discovering' that the soldiers bore no ill-will to the Maharaja; but that the ministry had done their best to injure them by expulsion from camp or immediate discharge. So the soldiers were resolved on retaliation and would undoubtedly have seized them in their houses or perhaps

54 For. Pol. Cons. 3 October 1833, No. 24, para 2.

55 Ibid., para 3.

56 Ibid., para 24.

in the palace or wherever they sought an asylum. The soldiers alleged that Dada Khasgiwala and Bhaoo Shastri behaved with treachery to the Bai and they now wished to act in the same way towards the Maharaja. The soldiers, therefore, were determined on rescuing the Maharaja from their hands.⁵⁷ The Resident advised a change of ministry to recover Maharaja's popularity and save his throne, brought into great jeopardy, through the 'folly or treachery' of the ministers. The Maharaja readily agreed to it. Narupant Apte was immediately invested with a Khilat and all the members of Dada Khasgiwala's ministry were dismissed in 'public Darbar' by the Maharaja.⁵⁸ The Resident then held a discussion with the Maharaja and the new Premier and then the troops surrounding the Burum and Bahadur Regiments were ordered back to their barracks.

The Resident expected that a change in the Ministry would restore all matters and parties to their former state. But the Burum and Bahadur Regiments still ^{remained} ~~remained~~ in arms as the Maharaja's intentions regarding the said Regiments had not been communicated to them. The Maharaja requested the Resident to send for them but Cavendish declined, for he did not know their intentions or wishes. Besides, the Resident added, if he sent for the Regiments and they refused his mediation, he would fall in the public estimation. He told the Maharaja that "they should solicit my interposition, I must not make any advances". However, the Maharaja being dreadfully alarmed and apprehending to be seized by the Burums and Bahadurs every moment, the Resident advised him to rally his friends round him and as such a measure was impossible in a crowded city, the Resident further advised the Maharaja to move out of the capital.⁵⁹ But the Maharaja was unwilling to adopt so decisive a line of

57 Ibid., para 23.

58 Ibid., para 9.

59 Ibid., para 13.

conduct and on the 11th, the day fixed for his departure, he did not leave the camp. On the morning of the 12th, however, the Burums and Bahadurs sent a message to the Resident requesting his good offices in their favour with the Maharaja. The Resident advised them to be present at the Darbar in the evening of the same day. In the Darbar, they made three requests. First, they desired to be pardoned for their late mutiny. Secondly, they requested that Col. Jacob should be replaced by another Brigadier. Lastly, they appealed for the restoration of their rights and privileges of guarding the palace which they had enjoyed for the last thirty years.⁶⁰

The Maharaja pardoned the Burum and Bahadur Regiments for their late mutiny. He also agreed to replace Col. Jacob by another Brigadier. Since the outbreak of the mutiny in the Burum and Bahadur Regiments, Jacob had fled from his Brigade and had sought an asylum in the palace, which he would not leave though repeatedly urged by the Maharaja. For such cowardice, and on account of his unpopularity in having joined the late ministry and the consequent impossibility of prevailing on the troops to obey his orders, the Resident advised the Maharaja for the Colonel's removal.⁶¹ The Resident also recommended the appointment of the Maharaja's maternal uncle Mama Saheb to the command of the Colonel Jacob's Brigade. The Resident's view was that the Maharaja himself and the troops had more confidence in the new Brigadier than in any other person in camp. His relationship to the Maharaja would ensure awe and respect and convince the soldiers of his being sincerely attached to the Maharaja. The Resident added that the maternal uncle could not be suspected of treachery towards the Maharaja and of an anxiety for the Bai's return, for she had banished him from the camp some years ago and he was no way connected with her.⁶² The Maharaja accepted the Resident's recommendation and immediately

60 Ibid., para 16.

61 Ibid., para 19.

62 Ibid., para 20.

appointed his maternal uncle as the new commandant of the Jacob's Brigade. On the morning of August 13, 1833, the whole Brigade, with the exception of the "Sahebzadeh" and "Orderly" Battalions still attached to Col. Jacob, received the new brigadier on the ground with the customary honours and fired a salute in honour of having one of the Maharaja's family members, as their commandant.

As to the restoration of the rights of guarding the palace to the Burums and Bahadurs, it was settled that on Sunday the 15th 'a lucky day', the Burum Battalion should be placed to guard the palace and the relief was to take place as if nothing had ever happened. The Maharaja, however, hesitated to entrust the Burum Battalion with the task of security duties of the palace, for though it had placed him on the throne, it now was at the head of the mutiny. But Resident Cavendish was eager to have that Regiment on guard to dispel the mutual suspicions and doubts of the Maharaja and the Burum and to dissipate some idle reports regarding the intentions and fidelity of the said Regiment. The Resident reminded the Maharaja of the great risk taken by the Battalions in placing him on the throne. In recognition of their services the Maharaja had at first given them written and verbal promises to retain them as palace-guards, but the ministry headed by Dada Khasgiwala persuaded him to disregard the promises as a result of which the battalions concerned revolted. Being unable to enforce obedience, the Maharaja had once again agreed to restore them to all their honours and duties. Under such circumstances, the Resident added, the Maharaja's best and only policy would be ~~to receive~~ them as usual as palace-guard and thereby securing their fidelity to him. The Resident remarked that if the Maharaja refused to allow the Burum and Bahadur to discharge their former duties at the palace, he would have to extend this exception to eight other Battalions, who had joined them and only two, i.e.

the "Sahebzadeh" and "Orderly" still attached to Jacob, would have been left for the palace guards.⁶³

Resident Cavendish had recommended the appointment of the Maharaja's maternal uncle to the command of the First Brigade in the hope that his relationship to the Maharaja would ensure respect and convince the troops of his being sincerely attached to the Maharaja. But Mama Saheb proved himself to be very unpopular with his men and officers for his habit of regularly demanding bribes from them. He also increased the pay of the officers and sepoy of certain regiments with a view to strengthen his position. This enraged the palace guards and they demanded Mama's removal from the command and the reinstatement of Col. Jacob. The Maharaja consulted the Resident and the latter advised him to do what the troops desired. Accordingly, the Maharaja restored Col. Jacob to his old position. However, the Maharaja was greatly attached to his maternal uncle who had brought him up and educated since his father Patloji Sindhia being a common horseman, could not take care of his son. Although, therefore, Mama Saheb was removed from the command of the troops, the Maharaja made him Prime-minister, and Nana Apte, the present Premier, was made the Chief-Secretary to Mama Saheb.⁶⁴ Here also, Mama proved himself incompetent for his new position. He was not only ignorant of state affairs, but also lacking in conciliatory habits or temper.

In March 1834, the troops who had not received their pay for many months agitated for the payment of their arrears and demanded that their monthly salaries be paid regularly. Dada Khasgiwala the dismissed ex-Premier, and one of his cabinet colleagues, Maniram, took advantage of the agitation of the

63 Ibid., para 18.

64 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 49.

troops to overthrow Mama Saheb's ministry. Their plan was to murder Mama Saheb for which Maniram offered one lac of rupees to one Karim Khan, and then make Patloji, the Maharaja's father before adoption, the Prime-minister and under him Dada Khasgiwala, the Deputy.⁶⁵ Towards the end of 1833, Patloji came from the Deccan to meet his son; but a common hatred had existed between him and Mama Saheb and the latter apprehended that Patloji's purpose of visiting his son was to subvert Mama's authority over the Maharaja. Mama, therefore, took every measure to prevent the entry of Patloji into the Gwalior territory. Early in 1834, Patloji's attempt to enter forcibly into the Gwalior dominions was frustrated by the Sindhia's troops under Filose. Patloji, however, obtained passports from the British authorities at Indore and fixed his residence there near the Gwalior frontier. He planned to invade Gwalior and in accordance with that purpose, began to collect troops and money on the strength of the British passport. His vakil Ganpatrao frequently visited the Indore Political Authorities, and the Indore Darbar furnished Patloji with a 'Guard-of-Honour'. All these created a belief in the minds of the people at Indore that Patloji's cause was patronised by the British Government.⁶⁶ However, Dada Khasgiwala and Maniram's plan to substitute the ministry of Mama Saheb by that of Patloji failed. When the Gwalior troops started clamouring for their arrears, the Resident advised the Maharaja to pay off their dues. The Maharaja did accordingly, and thereafter the soldiers refused to join Dada Khasgiwala and Maniram who had sent agents to them with the purpose of instigating them against Mama Saheb. ~~The soldiers~~ surrendered those agents to the Maharaja and on the basis of their confessions Dada Khasgiwala and Maniram were imprisoned in the forts of Narwar and Gwalior respectively.⁶⁷

65 For. Pol. Cons. 19 June 1834, No. 61.

66 For. Pol. Cons. 26 August 1834, No. 49.

67 For. Pol. Cons. 19 June 1834, No. 61.

Dada Khasgiwala and Maniram had been in touch with Baizabai and her followers.⁶⁸ The Bai's plan was to invade Gwalior and overthrow Jankojirao and regain her lost position. Sakhapant Bapu, the acting-Premier during the Bai's rule, was suspected of holding a correspondence with her. The Bai also summoned one of her cousins, Ambaji Gwatika, from the Deccan, who took up position thirty miles from Gwalior on the Datia frontier with a large body of horsemen. On being asked by Resident Cavendish, however, the Raja of Datia removed forcibly Ambaji along with his men. Then Ambaji moved towards Agra with the intention of joining the Bai.⁶⁹ Thakur Aksh Singh, the ex-Premier of Alwar, who had been residing at the Bai's camp for sometime, sent his agents to different parts of Rajasthan to collect troops for Baizabai.⁷⁰ One Goverdhan Das, who had long resided with Hindurao, went to Kotah to collect troops for the Bai. Thereafter Rana of Kotah discharged a body of troops, with secret orders to join Baizabai.⁷¹ Her agent had also been at Bithur in raising troops and purchasing artillery and warlike stores.⁷² On October 26, 1833, Baizabai wrote a letter to Bentinck in which she informed the Governor-General that the adoption of Jankoji Sindhia had not been effected or accomplished according to the regular custom, i.e. her engagements had not been transmitted to the Maharaja on his accession to the throne, nor the British Government had been requested to grant an honorary robe for the Maharaja as an heir apparent to Daulatrao Sindhia. Besides, the Bai added, that Jankojirao had entered into two engagements with her whereby he had surrendered all his claim to the government of Gwalior to Baizabai.

The copies of those engagements⁷³ were enclosed by the Bai in her letter to

68 Ibid.

69 For. Pol. Cons. 26 September 1833, No. 10.

70 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 49.

71 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 53.

72 For. Pol. Cons. 5 December 1833, No. 77.

73 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 58.

the Governor-General, in which she further urged him to restore her rights or to grant her such parts of the British territories which might be sufficient for the maintenance of herself and other members of her family.⁷⁴

Governor-General Bentinck, however, refuted Baizabai's charge that her reign was terminated by the intervention of the British Resident. The part played by the Resident during the revolution, the Governor-General added, was solely dictated by a solicitude for the safety of the Bai's person. On the question of conferring a khilat of investiture on the Maharaja, the Governor-General informed the Bai that the ceremony might be dispensed with altogether if not agreeable to the Maharaja. The Governor-General further reminded the Bai that she had been granted an asylum in the British territories on condition of her 'renouncing all claims to the Government of Gwalior', which the 'popular voice' had assigned to Jankojirao. But it was never intended that the Bai should permanently take up her abode in the vicinity of the state which she had quitted, and that she should be allowed to carry on intrigues against the Gwalior Government from her place of asylum. The Bai was, therefore, requested to give up her attempt of regaining by force the position she had lost, disband her troops, and take up her residence at Benares, or any other station 'more remote than Agra from the Gwalior territories', or she might quit the British territories. The Governor-General warned the Bai that should she reject the above advice, he would think of further measures with a view to prevent an improper use being made of the asylum granted to her.⁷⁵

Resident Cavendish held the view that 'obstructions instead of aid' should be substituted to bring about in a quiet and peaceable way the dispersion of Baizabai's large army quite unnecessary for her protection in British territory. Accordingly, he instructed his assistant Ross, who had been residing

74 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 57.

75 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 59.

with the Bai, to ask the magistrate of Agra to cancel his previous orders regarding the supply of food and general stores to the Bai.⁷⁶ Ross was also asked by the Resident not to permit the Bai to march higher up the Jamuna till she had reduced her force and made over seven guns with her to Ross. Her communications with Alwar and other states friendly to her cause were also required to be stopped. On November 20, 1833, Ross asked the Bai to quit Agra and proceed to Mathura or Brindaban. On 29th Baizabai crossed the Jamuna and proceeded to Mathura. Cavendish, however, did not deem it wise to allow her to reside at Mathura which was not very far from Agra and asked her to proceed to Benares.⁷⁷

Meanwhile, Hindurao's agents at Gwalior had been active in overthrowing the ministry of Mama Saheb.⁷⁸ Baizabai, Hindurao, and Appa Patenkar, the son-in-law of Daulatrao Sindhia, had their men among the palace guards and the artillerymen.⁷⁹ In May 1834, accompanied by a few followers Patloji Sindhia entered into the Gwalior territory with the declared intention of meeting his son who had become seriously ill and was under the medical care of John Hope the physician of the Resident. But Mama Saheb prevented the father from obtaining an interview with his ailing son. Mama even tried to arrest Patloji who then took refuge with the artillery. Maniram had already paid five lacs of rupees to Baldeo Sing, one of the artillery commanders. Baldeo Singh's brigade along with the palace guards surrounded the Maharaja's Palace and requested the Maharaja to expel Mama Saheb from the capital as he was a person of ill-repute.⁸⁰ The Maharaja, after consulting the Resident,

76 For. Pol. Cons. 21 November 1833, No. 42.

77 For. Pol. Cons. 5 December 1833, No. 84.

78 For. Pol. Cons. 7 November 1833, No. 52.

79 For. Pol. Cons. 19 June 1834, No. 62.

80 For. Pol. Cons. 12 June 1834, No. 161.

complied with the demand of the troops. Mama was sent away to the Deccan. Baizabai, who was at this time at Fatehgar on her way from Mathura to Benares under orders from the Resident, felt elated at the news of Mama Saheb's expulsion from Gwalior, and sent letters to the prominent chiefs at the capital urging them to support her cause. She promised them suitable rewards if she succeeded in regaining her lost position.⁸¹ The Maharaja, finding his position insecure among the palace-guards, requested the Resident to lend him support of the Contingent, which the Resident did.⁸² With the Contingent's packing, Col. Baptiste reduced the artillery to the most perfect state of discipline by paying up and discharging some hundreds of them. Several hundreds soldiers, connected with the mutineers, decamped after receiving their pay. The palace-guards were weaned away from Appa Patankar's and Hindurao's connection and from the relations of Baizabai's followers. In all about 4,000 soldiers were disbanded.⁸³ In Baizabai's camp at Farukkabad, too, a mutiny broke out. Her troops had been in arrears for a long time and they were tired of moving from one place to another with the Bai. The British authorities at Agra employed the force to suppress the mutiny so that no serious disturbance might break out in the British territory. This relieved the Bai of her difficulties and she refused to leave Fatehgar with the intention of carrying on intrigues against the Gwalior Government. Governor-General Lord Auckland also did not deem it wise to allow Capt. Ross to stay with the Bai, as it encouraged her in her designs against Jankojirao. Ross was therefore asked to return to his normal duties at Gwalior.⁸⁴ The Governor-General also asked Maj. Sutherland, the newly appointed Resident at

81 For. Pol. Cons. 19 June 1834, No. 60.

82 For. Pol. Cons. 24 June 1834, No. 10.

83 For. Pol. Cons. 9 October 1834, No. 58.

84 For. Pol. Cons. 17 August 1835, No. 24.

Gwalior, to pay up the arrears of the troops attached to Baizabai under such precautions as would prevent their again entering into the Bai's service. The sum, required for this purpose was advanced by the British Government, and it was to be recovered either from the treasure found at the Bai's house at Benaras or from her pension.⁸⁵ The Maharaja agreed to grant to the Bai four lacs of rupees per annum under the guarantee of the British Government during her life time. She was left at liberty reside at any place not within the sovereign possessions of the Maharaja. The British pledged itself to crush any intrigue on the part of the Bai injurious to the Maharaja or likely to disturb the public tranquillity either at Gwalior proper or in other parts of Sindhia's territories.

85 For. Pol. Cons. 2 November 1835, No. 19.

CHAPTER - VI

THE GWALIOR REFORMED CONTINGENT

Jankojirao's greatest defect was a want of personal courage. The more clear-cut and vital decisions of policy were largely beyond his comprehension. The recurring mutinies in his army, intrigues at the court, and, Baizabai's attempts to regain her lost position at Gwalior had so much unnerved him that he could not trust anyone near his person. On several occasions he expressed his eagerness to enter into an offensive and defensive treaty with the British Government against external and internal enemies. Such a treaty would necessarily have given the Maharaja the right to invoke British assistance against his internal enemies. British policy was, however, not in favour of granting any assistance to ^{an} Indian ruler which would amount to an interference in his domestic affairs. Resident Cavendish, therefore, discouraged the idea of a defensive and offensive treaty against internal enemies.¹ He, however, assured the Maharaja that the existing treaties between the British Government and late Daulatrao Sindhia would remain in full force.

However, an arrangement existing between the two governments required to be reviewed in the changed circumstances occasioned by the removal of Baizabai from power at Gwalior. It was the Gwalior Contingent which had originally been formed by the treaty of 1817 for the purpose of co-operating with the British troops in the operations against the Pindari hordes. When the Pindaris were suppressed, the British Government desired that the Contingent should not be disbanded but that it should be continued for sometime to act with the British troops to prevent the revival of predatory system in any part of Sindhia's territory. Sindhia agreed to continue it as he found

1 For. Pol. Cons. 19 June 1834, No. 61.

this well-disciplined force very useful in suppressing his recalcitrant chiefs. The Contingent did this job very well. It will not be out of place to discuss in detail its organization and of the mode of paying its men, which the British authorities in India regarded as the two most important means of influencing and controlling the Contingent.

Article 4 of the treaty of 1817 stipulated that Sindhia would provide 5,000 soldiers to form the Contingent. Governor-General Lord Hastings did not deem it advisable to form the whole number into one corps, but into separate divisions to act with different divisions of the British armies, although he did not object to the whole Contingent being under the control of a single commander of Sindhia who should be 'Sirdar of respectable character and qualifications'. At first, Babaji Patankar, uncle of Baizabai, was selected by Sindhia for this post; but soon he was replaced by Udaji Khatkia. In order to utilise the services of the Contingent in the best possible manner, the Governor-General proposed that a British officer should be attached to the head-quarters of the Contingent to act with the Indian commander of the whole Contingent. Accordingly, Captain Blacker, the Assistant to the Resident at Gwalior, was named for the post. The principal duty of Blacker was "to see that the engagements of Sindhia's government with respect to the horse are fulfilled with sufficient exactness, to encourage the commandant to his duty and to keep the Resident apprised of all his proceedings and of the movements and operations of the Contingent."² Another principal division of the Contingent was to be placed under Capt. Fielding of the 8th Native Cavalry. Fielding would act in the same capacity as that of Blacker, but he was placed under the general authority of the latter. Both Blacker and Fielding would correspond with Maj. Gen. Donkin and attend to his orders with regard to the positions or movements of the Contingent and through these two officers the

orders of Donkin would be conveyed to the commanders of each division.³

Although Sindhia was required to provide 5,000 good men for the Contingent, he could not devise means of selecting the best horsemen from amongst his vast army. Therefore, Governor-General Lord Hastings asked Resident Close to recruit directly some horsemen for the Contingent and to defray the expenses of those men from the fund allotted for the force.⁴ Accordingly, the Resident asked Capt. Fielding, assistant-Superintendent of the Contingent, to raise without delay 1,000 cavalry-men. Capt. Blacker recruited directly 460 men. Besides, a section of troops commanded by Udaji Khatkia who had been chosen the commander of the Contingent, threatened to desert the newly formed force. In order to prevent the disorganization of the Contingent Capt. Blacker took them under his command.⁵ Thus, though at first it was intended to compose the Contingent solely of troops raised by the different chiefs of Sindhia, ultimately nearly 2,000 of its men were directly raised by the British officers attached to the Contingent.

Irregular payment was the main cause of indiscipline and insubordination among the troops of Sindhia. It was the policy of the British Government to keep in its hand every arrangement for defraying the expenses of the troops as the means of keeping the men of the Contingent under a proper degree of subjection and control. Another principle regarding the expenditure of the Contingent was that the total cost for its maintenance was to be defrayed from the funds allotted for the purpose without occasioning any additional burden to the British Government.⁶ Article 5 of the Treaty of 1817 with Sindhia stipulated that the pay of the commander and the men of the Contingent should be defrayed

3 Ibid.

4 For. Sec. Cons. 30 January 1818, No. 68.

5 C.I.A.R., File No. 32, pp. 189 - 191.

6 For. Sec. Cons. 24 July 1818, No. 608.

from the stipends paid by the British Government to Sindhia, his family members and ministers under the terms of the Treaty of 1805. Sindhia also agreed to relinquish for two years the tribute paid to him by Jodhpur, Bundi and Kota. From all these available sources, the total amount in the fund of the Contingent came to Rs.34,00,000.⁷ Resident Glose expected that the two years' time would be sufficient to finish the operations against the Pindaris, and accordingly, calculated the salaries of the men and officers of the Contingent on the basis of the funds made available to it. Rupees 4,000 per month was offered to the commandant of the Contingent while five subordinate chiefs were to receive Rs.2,000 each per month. At first, Resident Glose fixed the monthly pay of the troops at Rs.25 each. On Sindhia's demand that they should be given a higher rate of pay, it was later fixed at Rs.30. Thus, the annual expenditure of the Contingent estimated at Rs.16,68,000, was raised to Rs.19,68,000.⁸

After the Pindari war it was decided by both the Sindhia's and British Governments to continue the Contingent for preventing the revival of the predatory system in Sindhia's territories. But the question that cropped up was to devise means for providing adequate funds for its maintenance. Of the total amount appropriated for the payment of the Contingent, there was a balance of Rs.15,72,624-2-4 only, and it was sufficient for the maintenance of 5,000 horsemen. Sindhia suggested that the British levies under Capt. Blacker and Capt. Fielding should be disbanded, thereby making a reduction in the expenses of the Contingent. Resident Glose told Sindhia that it would be very unwise on the part of the latter to disband the British levies altogether as it was the most efficient part of the Contingent. The Resident, however, agreed to disband the whole men raised by Capt. Blacker, and of about 700 of those

7 C.I.A.R., File No. 32, p. 164. :

8 C.I.A.R., File No. 32, pp. 137-143 and 164.

under Capt. Fielding. There would then remain about 2,000 of Sindhia's own horsemen under Capt. Blacker and 1,000 of those directly recruited by Capt. Fielding, thus reducing the total number of men from 5,000 to 3,000. The Resident further added that the remaining balance of Rs.15,72,624-2-4 in the Contingent fund would be sufficient to meet the expenses of those 3,000 men for one year more.⁹ Both Sindhia and the Governor-General agreed to this plan. By an agreement of February 6, 1820, the size of the Contingent was further reduced proportionately to the funds already allotted for its maintenance. The number of men was reduced to 2,000 of whom 1,700 were Sindhia's troops and 300 were British levies. It was further decided by this agreement that Sindhia would hand over to the British Government the parganas of Yawal, Chopra, Pachora and twelve villages of Lohara pargana, and those possessions in Garh-Kota and Maltown which were intermixed with those of the British Government together with the fort of Garh-Kota for the liquidation of the debt incurred by Sindhia to the British Government for the payments already made to the Contingent.¹⁰ It was estimated by acting-Resident Stewart that by November 5, 1820, the debt incurred by Sindhia to the British Government on account of the Contingent would amount to Rs.18,86,679-5-8 and that by the end of 1825 the revenues of the districts transferred to the British Government by the treaty of 1820 would pay off the debt.¹¹

Immediately after her assumption of the office of the Regent, Baizabai requested the British Government for the discontinuance of the Contingent as it entailed a great expense on the Sindhia's Government. Daulatrao's annual pension of four lacs of rupees paid by the British Government, which formed part of the fund of the Contingent lapsed on his demise. Besides, there was

9 Ibid., pp. 47-49.

10 Ibid., pp. 161-162.

11 Ibid., pp. 154-159.

a debt of about twelve lacs of rupees due by the Sindhia's Government to the British.¹² But Governor-General Bentinck desired that the Contingent, which had rendered valuable services to both the Sindhia's and the British Government during the lifetime of Daulatrao, and was still unquestionably the most efficient portion of his troops, should be continued. At the same time, however, the Governor-General directed the Resident to decrease the expenses of the Contingent to the utmost extent practicable, and to bring its charges within the limits of the funds assigned for its maintenance after deducting the lapsed stipend of the late Maharaja.¹³ Resident Stewart admitted that the Contingent had become a most expensive corps, the pay of the horsemen at 30 Chanderi rupees per month being greater than that of any horseman in the service of the British Government in other parts of India. His view was that by a proper reduction of the pay of the horsemen of the Contingent, the funds applicable to its payment and to the liquidation of the debt, after deducting the late Maharaja's pension of four lacs of rupees, would still be sufficient for the maintenance of the 2,000 horsemen of the Contingent. Accordingly, the monthly pay of the horsemen was reduced from 30 to 25 Chanderi rupees. Still there remained a debt of about 14 lacs of rupees to be paid off to the British by the Sindhia's Government.¹⁴ But Baizabai strongly objected to this arrangement and proposed that the Contingent troops should be reduced so as to bring the expense within the amount strictly applicable to their payment, and the fund appropriated to the payment of the debt to be applied to that purpose. In November 1828, Sindhia's minister Bapu Chitnis died and his British pension of rupees 45,000 per annum which formed part of the funds for the maintenance of the Contingent, lapsed to the

12 For. Sec. Cons. 24 August 1827, No. 12.

13 For. Sec. Cons. 5 October 1827, No. 3.

14 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 21.

British Government. Baizabai positively refused to make up the deficiency and consequently, acting-Resident Fielding instructed Capt. Stubbs; the Superintending Commander of the Contingent, to reduce the expenses of the force to that amount by striking off 150 Maratha horsemen.¹⁵ When the revolt of 1833 removed Baizabai from power at Gwalior, her annual pension of 2,24,000 Chanderi rupees which had hitherto been appropriated for the payment of the Contingent horsemen, was withdrawn. Accordingly, 600 more horsemen were reduced.¹⁶ Thus, the strength of the Contingent was reduced to 1,000 in 1833.

As the Contingent had to be reduced in commensurate with the depleted fund set apart for its maintenance, the British Government planned to make it more efficient by reorganising it on the model of a regular army. Originally, the Contingent was composed only of horsemen. In 1827, Resident Stewart submitted to the British Government a plan whereby the Contingent was to consist of a Brigade of infantry, a Company of native artillery, a Regiment of irregular horsemen and a Company of Pioneers.¹⁷ But Baizabai's insistence on keeping separate the two funds - the fund for liquidating Sindhia's debt to the British Government on account of the Contingent, and the fund for maintenance of the Contingent itself - and reducing the Contingent so as to bring the expense within the amount strictly applicable to its maintenance, led to the rejection of Stewart's plan of remodelling the Contingent. The Resident then suggested a plan whereby the number of horsemen would be reduced to 1,000, but in lieu of the 1,000 horsemen discharged a battalion of infantry

15 For. Pol. Cons. 20 March 1829, No. 25.

16 For. Pol. Cons. 6 March 1834, No. 32.

17 For. Sec. Cons. 1 June 1827, No. 12.

with two guns, should be attached to the Contingent.¹⁸ This proposal was also rejected by Baizabai as she preferred the Contingent on its present footing to the disbanding of the Maratha horsemen.

In 1833, when Baizabai was ousted from Gwalior, both Resident Cavendish and Major Stubbs proposed certain reforms in the Contingent in order to make it an efficient force, but both of them differed radically in their views. While Major Stubbs proposed that only the Maratha portion of the Contingent should be reduced proportionately owing to the deficiency in the funds caused by the lapsed pension of Baizabai, Resident Cavendish held the view that the reductions should be equally borne by both the Maratha and the British portion of the Contingent. Stubbs also proposed that the Maratha horsemen should be formed into regular battalions in the same manner as the British levies, and they were to be placed entirely under the British officers. The Maratha part of the Contingent was composed of Ekas or men riding their own horses, and Bargirs who were servants or relations of the Maratha chiefs whose horses they rode. The pay of the Bargirs might be anything from Rs. 4 to 15. If a Bargir happened to be relative of the chiefs, he received double and perhaps treble what an ordinary Bargir would receive. The Maratha chief often compelled their Bargirs to receive less than the full pay authorised by the Darbar by threatening them with dismissal. This prevented the Bargirs from properly feeding their horses and furnishing themselves with arms, clothings, etc. Stubbs, therefore, proposed that the Maratha officers in command of Pagas should not be permitted to discharge any of their Bargirs without the prior permission of the Superintending Command of the Contingent. Resident Cavendish, however, opposed this plan on the ground that the Maratha chiefs would not agree to put their Bargirs on the same footing as those of the

18 For. Sec. Cons. 14 March 1828, No. 21.

Contingent, that discontent would spread among the chiefs, and that they would condemn the Maharaja as a mere tool in the hands of the British Government. So far as the question of increasing the efficiency of the Contingent was concerned, the Resident argued that the Contingent was not to be employed in the internal matters of the Sindhia's Government, and hence, there was no necessity of increasing its efficiency. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, it was of great benefit to the Sindhia's Government in suppressing the Pindaris and in setting internal disturbances in the capital itself. If the British Government desired to revert, the Resident said, to the old system of allowing British officers and the Contingent to support the Sindhia's Government against internal disturbances and rebellions, Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia, threatened as he was by Baizabai's attempt at a counter-revolution at Gwalior, might agree to some changes and to the maintenance of the Contingent at its present strength. But such support to the Maharaja, the Resident remarked, would be quite at variance with the British system of non-interference. As, however, the question of reducing the Contingent had become embarrassing by the doubt raised as to the best means of effecting the reduction, Cavendish suggested that the whole Contingent should be dispensed with and a new agreement might be entered into with the Maharaja whereby he would place at the disposal of the British Government, when required, the whole of his disposable horsemen, infantry and artillery under British officers, and binding himself by deed that no Pindari or body of plunderer should ever disturb British territories.¹⁹

Cavendish, however, was soon replaced by Sutherland at the Gwalior Darbar. The new Resident claimed himself to be 'an advocate for Contingents' which he considered as placing military strength in the hands of the British Government at the expense of British allies whose military power they were

¹⁹ For. Pol. Cons. 6 March 1834, No. 31.

at the same time calculated to reduce.²⁰ He submitted to the British Government a draft plan for improving the efficiency of the Contingent, in proportion to the diminution of its numbers arising out of the loss of Baizabai's pension of two lacs of rupees. Sindhia's Government was, however, very much eager to get back the territories of Garh-Kota, Maltown, Yawal and Choprah. The annual collections from these territories amounting to Rs.1,35,000 had so long been assigned to the British Government for the purpose of liquidating the debt which had occurred on account of the Contingent. At a conference with Resident Sutherland on July 2, 1835, Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia urged the Resident that as the debt of Rs.1,50,000 incurred by his government on account of the Contingent had already been settled, the British Government should restore to him the parganas of Yawal, Choprah, Pachora and twelve villages in the Lohara Pargana which were in Khandesh, and Garh-Kota and Maltown in the Saugor Agency. However, when the Resident expressed his eagerness to have the tributes from those territories for the purpose of reorganising the Contingent, the Maharaja agreed to continue for two years to pay to the British Government in cash the amount equivalent to the annual income from them, viz. Rs.2,70,000. With this amount together with the Rajput tributes amounting to Rs.3,42,500 per annum, which had been permanently assigned to the British for the payment of the Contingent, the British Government could organize the Contingent according to its own fashion, the Maharaja said. The Governor-General, however, expressed his regret at the reduction of the funds for the support of the Contingent. He informed the Maharaja that there would be no difficulty in restoring those territories which were under the management of the British Government if funds for the Contingent could be supplied in an

20 For. Pol. Cons. 27 July 1835, No. 88.

equally satisfactory manner.²¹ In 1837 an agreement was signed between the British Government and the Maharaja whereby the latter agreed to defray all the charge of a force, to be commanded by British officers and constantly stationed within his territories, for the 'protection' thereof and the preservation of good order therein.²² It was further decided by this agreement that Garh-Kota and Maltown in the Saugor Agency would remain under the management of the British Government who should utilise the revenues from those places for the purpose of maintaining the Contingent. The districts of Pachora, Yawal, Choprah and twelve villages in Lohara pargana would be restored to Sindhia who should pay to the British in half yearly instalments for the support of the Contingent the sum of Rs.66,926 equal to the present net revenue of those districts. Thus, this amount together with the Rajput tributes of Rs.3,42,500 per annum, made a total of Rs.4,09,426 and this amount was made available to the British Government for the maintenance of the Contingent and its reorganization according to its own plan.²³

Resident Sutherland submitted a plan of the Gwalior Reformed Contingent on the model of the Hyderabad Contingent. It was to consist of 600 cavalrymen of which 400 were to be drawn from the Company's troops in India and 200 from Sindhia's men already serving in the Contingent, of a regiment of infantrymen of 600, and an artillery of 52 men with two nine pounder guns and two twenty-four pounder howitzers. The whole Contingent was to be led by Brigadier Major Stubbs who had so long acted as the Superintending Commandant of the Contingent. Two officers were selected for the cavalry. They were Captain Minto who was put in command of it, and Lieutenant Lumsdaine was made adjutant of it. For the Infantry three officers were appointed Captain Michell was appointed the

21 For. Pol. Cons. 27 July 1835, No. 89.

22 C.U. Aitchison, Vol V, p. 117.

23 For. Pol. Cons. 27 July 1835, No. 88, For. Pol. Cons. 11 January 1836, No. 57.

Commandant, while Corporal Jobin and Corporal Stewart of the 13th British Light Infantry were made the Sergeant Major and Quarter-Master Sergeant respectively. John. H. Smyth, Second-Lieutenant of the Bengal Artillery, was put in charge of the artillery regiment of the Contingent. Smyth selected Staff Sergeant Molley of the 3rd Company of the Second Battalion of the British Artillery in India for the office of the Magazine Sergeant to the Battery of the Reformed Gwalior Contingent.²⁴ Thus the Gwalior Reformed Contingent consisted of Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery Regiments officered by the British men. Besides, there was the Medical Branch which was put in charge of Major John Hope who had so long acted as the Superintending Doctor of the Sindhia's Contingent.

Major Stubbs who had been entrusted with the task of remodelling the Sindhia's Contingent, prescribed some "Standing Orders"²⁵ for the force with a view to make it a well-disciplined corps. Some of the orders were copied from the Hyderabad Code of the Nizam's Contingent while several others were taken from the regulations of the British Army in India with such alterations as Stubbs considered advisable. The first order said that "the mild is not incompatible with the firm exercise of authority" and that the Regimental officers, while exercising the authority necessary in support of discipline, should not disregard the feelings of the Indian soldiers. The second order said that "ready and cheerful obedience which is the first duty of a soldier", depended on the conduct and example of the European officers of the Contingent. Order number six said that Indian officers attending at a European officer's quarters on duty which might require their being detained" are to be furnished with a chair and treated with the courtesy due to their

24 For. Pol. Cons. 11 January 1836, No.60; For. Pol. Cons. 5 December 1836, No. 59; For. Pol. Cons. 5 June 1837, No. 20.

25 For. Pol. Cons. 5 June 1837, No. 23.

situations". Order number eight said that the European officers should use orderlies on public duty only. Order number twelve said that the European officers were expected to visit occasionally the sick of their respective regiments, and ascertain by personal enquiry if they were furnished with everything necessary for sick men. This was an 'essential part of an officer's duty' nothing being so 'gratifying to the native soldiers, as to perceive that his officer is interested in his welfare.' The cavalry was regarded by Major Stubbs as the most important branch of the Contingent and, therefore, a separate code of rules²⁶ was promulgated for it. For the satisfactory performance of his duties, the Commanding officer of the Contingent was required to hold free and unrestricted communication with all ranks from the Head Risaladar down to the most dependent Bargir. The officer ought to know their wants and to adopt measures for redress of their grievances, whether they stemmed from the organisation of the Contingent or from the conduct of an individual. The internal discipline of the Regiments were left to their own Risaladars, Jamadar and Dafadars. Risaladar-Major Daud Khan who had earned a reputation for his services under Colonel Skinner, Blacker and Fielding, was to be the connecting link between the European and Indian officers, and as he possessed the confidence of the men, much of the internal management and discipline of the Regiment might be entrusted to him. The most important part of the cavalry regulations was that which dealt with the relation between the Silahdar and his Bargir. The Silahdar had no authority except over his own Bargirs or the men who rode his horses. A Silahdar was answerable for the goodness and condition of his horses. The selection of the Bargir was to be left to the Silahdar, but as soon as a Bargir entered the service of a Silahdar, he was to be considered a Government servant; and as such,

26 For. Pol. Cons. 5 June 1837, No. 24.

he could not be dismissed by the Silahdar without the prior permission of the Commanding officer. Lastly, the Cavalry regulations required that nothing in the treatment or obedience should be imposed on or required of the soldier which might tend to lower him either in his own estimation or in the estimation of his fellows in or out of the service; for no soldier in India was more 'orderly or more respectful to his European officer than the native horsemen'.

Although the whole expenses of the Contingent was defrayed by the Sindhia's government, Governor-General Lord Auckland considered that its officers and men were highly paid. The cavalrymen were paid 30 Chanderi rupees each, while an Infantryman and Artilleryman received Rs.7 and 9 respectively. The Commanding officer of the Contingent whose rank was equivalent to that of a Brigadier in the British Army, received a monthly pay of Rs.2,128-1-8. While the Commandant of the Cavalry was paid a monthly pay of Rs.1,064-6-0, that of the Infantry and Artillery was Rs. 899-12-8½ each. The Adjutants for the Cavalry and Artillery received Rs. 665-12-3 each while the officer Second-in-Command of Infantry received a pay of Rs. 638-10-0. The Surgeon of the Contingent received a monthly salary of Rs.1000. Lord Auckland very well knew that the pay of the men of the Contingent could not be reduced; but it seemed to him that the allowances of the officers were on an unnecessarily high scale. It also appeared to the Governor-General that the office of the Commanding officer of the Contingent was superfluous. For the necessary duties of the command on the spot, the Governor-General considered it quite sufficient to give to the senior officer with the force some extra allowance such as to raise his whole receipts to Rs.1200 per mensem. Auckland proposed that as Brigadier Stubbs who had so long been in charge of the whole Contingent, was proceeding to the Cape of Good Hope on leave for two years, Captain Minto, Commandant of the cavalry, be put in charge of the whole Contingent, retaining also the command of the cavalry corps and drawing from

the Contingent funds Rs.1200 a month. The Governor-General also proposed to give another officer to the cavalry. As Lieutenant George of the Infantry wished to be transferred to the Cavalry at his present rate of allowance, he should be given the new post in the Cavalry and a new Adjutant of Infantry be appointed at Rs.500 per month. The pay of the British officers with the Contingent was rearranged in the following manner :-

Officer-in-command and commanding the Cavalry	Rs. 1200 per mensem
Second commanding officer, Cavalry	: Rs. 700 " "
Lieutenant and Adjutant, Cavalry	: Rs. 600 " "
Captain commanding the Infantry	: Rs. 800 " "
Second Officer commanding the Infantry	: Rs. 600 " "
Lieutenant and Adjutant, Infantry	: Rs. 500 " "
Captain of Artillery	: Rs. 628 " "

The Governor-General estimated that the saving upon these reduced rates would be Rs.2,191 monthly. But Auckland hoped that the saving would be even more than the above amount as the new allowances were proposed to be consolidated and therefore, the net pay of the Company's officers which they received now in addition to their Gwalior allowances, must be deducted from the proposed consolidated salaries and the remainder would show the actual charge to the Contingent funds. Auckland suggested that the sum thus saved by these arrangements be applied to giving horses instead of bullocks to the artillery. Thus the above reforms into Sindhia's Contingent were intended by Lord Auckland to reduce the expenses hitherto incurred on account of the allowances of the British officers attached to the Corps, and to promote its efficiency.²⁷ Captain Minto, with the consent of Resident Spicers, gradually

27 For. Pol. Cons. 19 February 1840, No. 2.

discharged the invalid horsemen of the cavalry branch, making it thereby more effective than it had hitherto been.²⁸

Thus, the Gwalior Contingent though reduced in size, when reformed, became the most efficient corps. It ran parallel to Sindhia's own military force, but it surpassed the latter in respect of discipline and efficiency. One example will illustrate the point. Mardan Singh, the eldest son of the late Raja of Chanderi, had been recognised by Sindhia's Government as successor to his deceased father. But Mardan Singh's two younger brothers, Gaj Singh and Ranjit Singh, refused to recognise their elder brother as the ruler of Chanderi, and carried on depredations in different parts of Sindhia's territories. Other neighbouring tribes took advantage of this turmoil in Chanderi to plunder the territories belonging not only to Sindhia, but also those of the British and the Indore State. Salvadore Smith, serving under Sindhia's general Colonel Baptiste, was in charge of the Chanderi frontiers, but proved himself incapable of resisting the Bundelas and other tribal insurgents. The cavalry detachment of the Gwalior Reformed Contingent was rushed under Captain Minto to Chanderi and the insurgents were suppressed with perfect ease.²⁹

28 For. Pol. Cons. 9 March 1840 No. 200; For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1840, No. 61.

29 For. Pol. Cons. 29 June 1842, No. 55, 60-63.

CHAPTER - VII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFERENCE

Between 1835 and 1841, Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia had several bouts of serious illness and each time his life was despaired of. When in 1835 he fell seriously ill, Dr. Hope, the Residency Surgeon, attended on him on two occasions and after a thorough examination gave his expert medical opinion that the Maharaja would not enjoy a long span of life.¹ Although only nineteen years in age, he became scrofulous and consumptive. Due to his constitutional weakness, he continued to lose his powers of body and mind and the brilliant traits of his character which he had formerly exhibited began to diminish with the passage of time. As the Maharaja had no offspring and as there was no hope of having one in the near future, Resident Sutherland asked for instruction from the Governor-General on the probable question of succession to the principality of Gwalior. The Resident was of the view that in the event of the Maharaja's death without a son, his only wife Tarabai should exercise the privilege of adopting an heir to the throne from amongst the members of the Sindhia family provided she did not declare herself to be pregnant. Under similar circumstances on two occasions in the past, when Mahadji Sindhia and Daulatrao Sindhia had died without male issues, the function of adopting heirs had devolved in their widows. But in the present case, the Resident apprehended, the right of Regency and title to manage the affairs of the state was likely to become a subject of triangular dispute between the families of the Sindhia, the father-in-law of the present Maharaja and Mama Saheb. Mama Saheb's power and influence which were paramount in Gwalior were not likely to terminate with the life

1 For. Pol. Cons. 21 December 1833, No. 33A.

of his nephew. He expelled from Gwalior Jaswantrao Ghorepare, the father-in-law of the Maharaja, on the charge of murder of a menial servant but in reality to get rid of him lest he should, through his daughter Tarabai, gain an influence over the Maharaja and become a potential rival to his rank and position of minister in the state. There was also a fear that Baizabai or any other pretender might usurp authority after the death of the Maharaja. In these circumstances, the Resident felt that the British could not remain silent spectators of disturbed conditions in Gwalior or to abstain from interfering in the affairs of that state on the death of the Maharaja. Sutherland considered it expedient to acknowledge the right of the widow to adopt an heir and act as Regent and to afford her and her adopted son security against encroachments without effecting interference in the internal administration of the country. If, however, disputes occurred then some sort of interposition would be considered necessary and expedient. On this point the Resident wanted definite instructions from the Governor-General.²

Governor-General Metcalfe, in his letter dated December 21, 1835, to the Resident adopted almost similar attitude as was done by Lord Amherst when the question of succession had exercised latter's mind in 1826. The Resident was instructed to bring to the mind of the Maharaja in strongest terms the evils of a disputed succession prejudicial to the welfare of his country and to the interests of the House of Sindhia and to ask him to adopt a son during his life-time to succeed him in the event of his death without a male issue and also to nominate a Council of Regency to administer the state during the minority of the adopted son. If, however, the Maharaja did not act upon the suggestion given to him and died without adopting a son,

2 Ibid.

then the right of his wife Tarabai to adopt a son from amongst the members of the Sindhia family and to act as Regent during his minority was to be recognised without any delay.³ But this arrangement was required to be in consonance with the general wish of the chiefs and nobles of the state.

On the instructions received from the Governor-General the Resident impressed on Mama Saheb, Sivajipant Tatia and Dadaji Khasgiwala that in the greater interest of the state it was highly desirable that the Maharaja should name a person from amongst the members of the Sindhia family as his successor as otherwise it would put the British Government to great embarrassment and might endanger the peace of the country. They fully agreed with the Resident but considered it vain to expect from the infant Maharaja to name a child for adoption. The Maharaja too resented such a suggestion and even deplored persuasions to contract a second marriage in order to have a son. As Tarabai had not reached the years of puberty there was no reason not to hope for an issue from her at proper time.⁴ Hence, the Resident failed in his attempts to induce the Maharaja to nominate his successor. In the meantime the Maharaja recovered his health and there remained no apprehension of his early death taking place. Therefore, the Resident expressed his view to the Governor-General that the paramount Power should not be concerned about succession in Gwalior. If there was no legitimate heir to that principality, there was hardly any member of the Sindhia family who could set up any pretensions to the throne. The Maharaja might have a son of his own in course of time. The adoption of a child, in case of a future issue, might create greater embarrassment than the death of the Maharaja without an adoption. The Resident assured the Governor-General

3 For. Pol. Cons. 21 December 1835, No. 33B.

4 For. Pol. Cons. 18 January 1836, No. 30.

that after the death of the Maharaja, there might not be much difficulty in accomplishing an adoption and recognising his widow as Regent during the minority of her adopted son, without the slightest apprehension of general tranquility being endangered. And even if any disturbance was caused by the men in arms to carve out a position in the state it would afford a most appropriate occasion and the best opportunity to destroy the troublous spirits and reduce the armed might of the state in the least objectionable manner.⁵ The Governor-General Lord Metcalfe fully endorsed the inexpediency of raising the issue of succession at a premature time.⁶

In February 1841, the Maharaja again had a severe attack of melancholia. This time his physician showed great anxiety about his recovery. Lt. Col. Alexander Spiers, the new Resident paid him a visit and found him 'very weak, pale and much reduced although he spoke with considerable confidence and mental balance'. He, therefore, brought the subject of succession to the immediate attention of the Governor-General Lord Auckland and sought his instructions on the issue. The Resident's own view was that the adoption of a son from the family of Sindhia by Tarabai was likely to prove most popular. However, the practical difficulty was that the Maharani was of too tender an age to make a selection after the death of her husband, and the discovery of a person closely related to the Sindhia family was not an easy task to be accomplished in a short time. The Resident expressed his apprehension that a vacant throne for a long time might become an inducement to ambitious persons to advance their claims and even to fight for it. In view of this contingency which might endanger peace, the Resident sought permission to select a member of the Sindhia family and in the event of the Maharaja's death to recommend that person to the Maharani for adoption with the consent of the leading chiefs

5 Ibid.

6 For. Pol. Cons. 18 January 1836, No. 31.

of the state and influential members of the Darbar.⁷ Lord Auckland, however, rejected the Resident's suggestion that the latter should select the boy for adoption. In a letter dated March 8, 1841, the Governor-General informed the Resident that the policy of the British Government would be only to recognise an adoption from the Sindhia family which might be made by Tarabai after the demise of her husband with the consent of the leading chiefs of the Darbar. The Resident was to guarantee security to the Maharani and her adopted son from molestation.⁸ The Maharaja, however, recovered from his illness and the plans regarding adoption were kept suspended for the time being.

In August 1842, once again the Maharaja fell seriously ill and Resident Spier suggested that the Governor-General's instructions should be modified to enable him to take necessary steps in the event of the Maharaja's death without any successor. The Governor-General Lord Ellenborough, however, declined to modify those instructions; but considering the very infirm state of the Maharaja's health, he asked the Resident to send a report on the character, condition and circumstances of the boys of the Sindhia family eligible to be selected as the successor to the ailing Maharaja. The Governor-General further asked for information about the attitudes of ministers, officers and chiefs with respect to adoption. Accordingly, the Resident transmitted along with other informations a genealogical table of the Sindhia family collected from the Persian Office of his Residency and corroborated by the best available sources in Gwalior. From this table it appeared that Bhagirathrao, son of Hanumantrao alias Babaji Sindhia, was nearest in blood to the reigning Maharaja. He was a sharp, fine and good-looking boy of about ten or eleven years.⁹ The Governor-General informed the Resident that Bhagirath rao

7 For. Pol. Cons. 8 March 1841, No. 42.

8 For. Pol. Cons. 8 March 1841, No. 43

9 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 4.

had the best claims to succession.¹⁰

On February 7, 1843, Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia expired and his widow Tarabai adopted, with the general concurrence of the Resident, and all the chiefs, Bhagirathrao as the successor to the late Maharaja.¹¹ On February 12, the new Maharaja ascended the throne under the name Jayajirao Sindhia.¹²

The adoption ceremony being over, the next problem was how to carry on the Government at Gwalior. Tarabai was merely a girl of about thirteen years while her adopted son was eleven years old. Thus, the extreme youth of both of them rendered it indispensable that a Regency should be appointed. Besides, as Resident Spier said, the existing ministry did not possess 'the confidence of the army or of the people' and therefore, it should be replaced by a Regency. It should be headed by the maternal uncle of the late Maharaja for, the Resident added, of all the persons in the Court of Gwalior he possessed the greatest influence and seemed 'to be attached to British interests.'¹³ The Governor-General, however, expressed his view that the Regency should be confided to one person in whom, during the minority of the Maharaja, might reside all the authority of the state. It would be for the Regent to nominate the Ministers and they would be responsible to him. This arrangement, the Governor-General added, while keeping intact the sovereign authority during the minority of the young Maharaja, would be most conducive to the maintenance of friendly relations between the Gwalior Raj and the British Government as, in all cases of complaint against the subjects of the state of Gwalior, the British Government would know 'what individual it should hold responsible for the conduct by which it was aggrieved.' Lord Ellenborough agreed with Resident

10 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 5.

11 For. Pol. Cons. 8 March 1843, No. 100.

12 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 13.

13 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 8.

Spier that Mama Saheb would be a suitable candidate for the post of Regency. Having no connection with the family of Sindhia by blood, he could have no interest contrary to that of the Maharaja upon whose life the continuance of his authority must depend. The Governor-General also expressed the hope that Maha Saheb, sensible of the importance of preserving a good understanding with the British Government would avoid giving umbrage to the latter. Moreover he would adopt all measures in collaboration with the British Resident which from time to time might appear to be required, for the 'preservation of tranquillity upon the common frontier' between the territories of the British Government and those of the Sindhia. The Governor-General would therefore 'gladly see the Regency conferred upon Mama Saheb'.¹⁴

The proposal for the appointment of Mama Saheb as Regent with such plenitude of power as the Governor General wished to confer upon him, immediately met with a strong opposition from the advisers of the Maharani. On February 21, 1843, Ramrao Phalke, the Darbar vakil, informed the Resident that three members of the existing ministry, Dada Khasgiwala, Sambaji Angria and Mulanji, wished to delay the appointment of a Regent and to allow the existing ministry to carry on the Government or to place Dada Khasgiwala in the office of the Regent. This made the Resident very pessimistic regarding the appointment of Mama Saheb as the Regent. But the Darbar vakil, who was a jahgirdar of the British Government,¹⁵ proved himself an able and faithful friend of the British Government on this occasion. He successfully persuaded the three ministers to agree to the nomination of Mama Saheb as Regent and to their obtaining the consent of the Maharani to his holding that important

14 Gwalior Further Papers, No.11.

15 Ramrao Phalke had been granted the jahgirdari of Alivardi Tihar near Delhi by the British Government by the Treaty of 1804.

post. In return, Mama Saheb must undertake to act in a manner that would not lower the dignity of the ministers in the public estimation. Lest Mama Saheb might not adhere to this promise after he was made the Regent, the ministers wished him to acknowledge it before the Resident.¹⁶

It was decided that on February 22, 1843, the day fixed for the new Maharaja's coronation, Mama Saheb would be publicly declared as the Regent. Accordingly, on that day the Resident came to the palace and the three ministers, Dada Khasgiwala, Sambaji Angria and Mulanji, informed him that they had agreed to the appointment of Mama Saheb as Regent. They also told him that the Maharani had given her consent to the appointment. After discussing the subject with the ministers the Resident's impression was that they wished to retain too strong a voice for the Maharani in the management of the affairs of the Government. The Resident told them that the Regent's power should be uncontrolled and that the Maharani and themselves, with the other influential people, should delegate to him the fullest powers. They were not to interfere with the Regent by bringing orders to him from the Rani who was still a child; in that case the consequence would be serious as all his efforts for the good of the country would be paralysed. The ministers, however, told the Resident that they had given Mama Saheb assurances that they would not thwart him and that they would assist him and attend to his orders. In order to verify the truth of the statements made by the ministers, the Resident sent for Mama Saheb who came and admitted that he himself, had agreed not to act unjustly towards any one of the ministers then present so as to injure their honour or reputation and that they, on their part, had promised their assistance to him in discharging the duties of the Regent. Then the Resident asked him whether he could conduct the affairs of the state so as to merit the approbation of the British and his own Government. To this Mama Saheb

replied that with the assistance of the members of the present ministry and with the Resident's advice, he considered himself capable of carrying on the affairs of the state and hoped to give satisfaction to all. Thereafter, the Resident sent Ramrao Phalke to the Maharani urging her to approve the appointment of Mama Saheb to the office of the Regent. Tarabai at first raised objections to Mama being appointed as the Regent. However, when Ramrao told her that there would be difficulty in getting the Maharaja's claims to the succession acknowledged if she did not give her consent to the appointment of Mama to the Regency, Tarabai did not demur to give her consent. She gave Mama the Khilat of investiture as Regent and thereafter, the ministers proclaimed publicly in the Darbar the elevation of Mama Saheb to the office of the Regent.¹⁷

The Governor-General, while expressing his satisfaction at the appointment of Mama Saheb to the Regency, hoped that the Regent should be sensible of the importance of preserving a good understanding with the British Government. It was expected, therefore, that he would readily avail himself of the advice of the Resident, and take in conjunction with that officer, all measures for the conduct of affairs at Gwalior. The Governor-General was even prepared to give armed support to the Regent's authority. An infantry brigade of three battalions under Ishwari Sing had been ordered by late Jankojirao to proceed to Malwa. The soldiers were, however, reluctant to leave the capital, and before quitting the city, committed several acts of indiscipline. The Maharaja had been advised by the British Government to enforce discipline in the army by meting out an exemplary punishment to Ishwari Sing who should be recalled to Gwalior, dismissed from service and be confined in the fort. Accordingly, the Maharaja ordered Ishwari Sing to return to Gwalior leaving his battalions at Malwa. But he probably suspected

17 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 15.

what was intended, and therefore, instead of returning alone, brought his battalions along with him, and assumed a defiant attitude. Governor-General Ellenborough expressed his view that the battalions commanded by Ishwari Sing should be disbanded and that the commander should be punished in an exemplary manner with the promptitude which would serve as an example in deterring men from committing offence. An early example of the vigorous enforcement of discipline in the army, the Governor-General remarked, 'will tend, more than any other measure, to consolidate the Regent's authority'. Ellenborough was even ready, 'at a moment's notice', to march British army into Sindhia's territory, for the purpose of helping the newly appointed Regent to inflict punishment on the mutinous brigade. With this view, the Governor-General had concentrated 'a preponderating force' near the frontier of the Gwalior territory. But Mama expressed his apprehension that calling in British troops for the punishment of Ishwari Sing and his battalions 'might cause a serious disturbance throughout the whole army' and 'loose him that popularity and confidence which the officers and troops of the army appeared to repose in him'. He, therefore, informed the Resident that he would 'prefer waiting his own time' for the punishment of Ishwari Sing and his corps, which he proposed doing on fully completing the payment of the infantry and cavalrymen. He settled with the Silahdar horsemen for the payment of their arrears. He also hoped to adjust within a few days the amount to be paid to the several Paga horsemen belonging to the government.

Although Mama was very cautious in not alienating the support of the army, he made a mistake in placing the Maharani's actions under a strict system of surveillance. Mama very well knew that his elevation to the office of the Regent and making him the sole authority of the state by the British Government, had earned him the enmity of those chiefs who had been replaced by the one-man Regency of Mama Sahab. Moreover, those chiefs especially Dada Khasgiwala, were frankly suspicious of the designs of the British Government

in making Mama Saheb the Regent. In order that these chiefs might not get any chance to conspire with the Maharani against the Regent, the wives of Mama Saheb and Ramrao were constantly in attendance on the Maharani. Besides, four slave-girls, belonging to the wife of Mama, were sent into the palace to watch and report all that passed. Still the Regent suspected Dada Khasgiwala of carrying on secret intrigues with the Maharani through the slave-girl Narangi. She had been a favourite of the late Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia; but Baizabai had her confined in the fort of Ishagar and ill-treated her in many ways. On assuming the reins of the Government, Jankoji released her and since then she had been residing at the palace. She was in the confidence of the Maharani and exercised a great influence over her. Another person whom Mama feared was Tantia Fakira Hazuria. He was an old servant of the highest respectability employed in the most confidential affairs. He was also a great friend of Narangi and Dada Khasgiwala with much more sense and shrewdness than either of them. When death occurred to Jankojirao, Tantia was in the Deccan where he had been sent by the late Maharaja to look out for a second wife for himself. Mama was anxious to prevent a junction between Narangi, Dada and Tantia and, therefore, ordered Tantia not to return to Gwalior without instructions. On March 9, 1843, however, Tantia returned to Gwalior and when he went to pay the Regent a visit, he was arrested and sent off to one of the regiments to be kept in confinement. Tarabai, probably instigated by Narangi, sent for the Regent and informed him that she had ordered Tantia's recall, and if he was not immediately released, she would leave the palace. Thereupon, the Regent released Tantia thinking that by doing so he could better effect his purpose of removing Narangi from the palace.¹⁸

When the Regent expressed his determination of removing Narangi from the palace at all hazards to the Resident, the latter agreed with him as to

the expediency of the speedy removal of her. But the Resident advised Mama Saheb that he should act with great caution and circumspection and not resort to harsh measures, so as to injure the feelings of the young Rani. Previous to his advising any decisive steps being taken in this affairs, the Resident sought instructions from the Governor-General. The latter expressed his displeasure at the interference made by the Maharani and her favourite Narangi with the Regent's authority. In a letter dated March 11, 1843, to the Resident, the Governor-General made it clear to the Resident that Mama Saheb was appointed not as a sole minister under the authority of the Maharani, but as a 'sole Regent' having all the authority as the responsible head of the Government.¹⁹ Accordingly, on March 17, the Resident went to the Darbar and addressed all the chiefs assembled there that the Governor-General had approved the Regent's nomination with the view of establishing an efficient administration at Gwalior and, therefore, all the chiefs should attend to the orders of the Regent at all times and all occasions. The Resident further told them that Narangi should not be allowed to interfere with the Regent's authority and that she should be removed from the palace.²⁰ All the chiefs assured the Resident that they were willing to obey all the orders which they might receive from the Regent and agreed to the removal of the Narangi. The Rani also agreed to part with Narangi on the latter being allowed to depart unmolested in full possession of her property.²¹ Besides, she should have a village bestowed on her to the annual value of three thousand rupees, in addition to one of the same amount which she already possessed. The Regent agreed to these terms in toto. Then Narangi asked for a Residency orderly to accompany her to her place of destination who would remain with her for two months. On receiving the Resident's assurance on this

19 For. Pol. Cons. 5 April 1843, No. 89.

20 For. Pol. Cons. 12 April 1843, No. 34.

21 Ibid.

point, Narangi agreed to leave the palace on March 19.

Resident Spier reported to the Governor-General that Narangi's removal would enable Mama Saheb to exercise his full powers without any opposition from any quarter. Soon, however, Mama Saheb incurred the displeasure of both the Rani and the prominent chiefs of the state. It was the custom that before a marriage was contracted for the Maharaja, the inclinations of all the chiefs, relatives and dependents of the bride and the bridegroom, should be consulted. Mama Saheb, however, planned a marriage between her niece, daughter of Janrao Kadam, and the Maharaja without consulting the chiefs of the state and against the wishes of the Rani. Mama, by promises of large bribes, induced Jaswantrao Ghorepare, the Rani's father, to join his cause. The father, by using various threats to his daughter, succeeded in securing her consent to the marriage. Mama Saheb expected that after the marriage was concluded he would eventually become the ruler of the state of which he was only a servant and with this view he got his brother Janrao Kadam to sign a paper making over his authority as the father of the bride, to himself. On May 19, the marriage was solemnised.²²

Mama Saheb next tried to remove Dada Khasgiwala from Gwalior. Early in March, 1843, Mama had informed the Resident that he proposed sending Dada to Benares with the bones of the late Jankoji Sindhia and his former wife. Mama added that Dada, having performed the same act for the remains of Daulatrao Sindhia, could not refuse to do so for the late Maharaja. Dada, apprehensive of personal violence if he refused to go, made preparations for his departure. On May 19, 1843, when the Resident went to the Darbar to witness the Tika ceremony, Dada said to him that he wanted to leave Gwalior and that he should

22 For. Pol. Cons. 7 June 1843, No. 47.

not be deprived of the lands and other emoluments that his family and himself had held for several generations. When the Regent was informed of the intentions of Dada, the former readily agreed to make arrangements for his departure on the next-day.²³

When the Rani came to know of the Regent's plan to remove Dada, she felt much annoyed that she had not been consulted. At about 11 A.M. on the 21st she held a conference with all the chiefs excepting the Regent and the Darbar wakil Ramrao Phalke. All the chiefs concurred with the Maharani that the Regent had no right to remove a honourable person like Dada Khasgiwala entrusted with the performance of the important duties of his office without having obtained the permission of the Maharani. Immediately after the meeting Maharani sent Udajirao Khatkia to the Resident with the message that though Mama Saheb had been appointed to the office of the Regent through her instrumentality, he forfeited the trust reposed in him. The Maharani brought forth several complaints against him. She, therefore, wished to deprive him of his present office and appoint some other person in his place.²⁴

The Resident asked Udaji of the nature of the complaints the Maharani wished to make against the Regent. When Udaji replied that she had not specified them, the Resident expressed his view that the message emanated not from the Maharani, but from the counsels of the evil disposed persons who gathered round her. The Resident told Udaji to inform the Rani that she had nominated Mama Saheb Regent with the approval of the Governor-General and by the advice of the principal chiefs and officers of her court; and therefore, Mama Saheb could not be so easily removed from his present post. The Resident added that if the Maharani and her evil-counsellors valued the friendship,

23 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 23.

24 For. Pol. Cons. 7 June 1843, No. 45.

and if the latter did not wish to incur the severest displeasure of the British Government, they should immediately desist from their present proceedings and obey the orders of the Regent.²⁵ On May 22, 1843, the Resident himself went to the Darbar where all the principal chiefs of the court except the Regent, were present. The Maharani told the Resident that he must have heard from Udaji her determination to remove Mama Saheb from the office of the Regent. Now she enumerated the circumstances which had compelled her to take that unpleasant step, viz. the seizure of the Tantia Pakira Hazuria, depriving her of the services of Narangi and Mama's plan to send off for good from the Court, Dada Khasgiwala. After stating one or two other grievances, the Rani said she could never think of allowing the Regent to continue in office.²⁶ The Resident replied by stating that though Tantia Pakira had been confined by Mama, yet he was, on her representations, released immediately, that Narangi had been allowed by her to leave the court and that Khasgiwala had himself applied to the Resident himself to obtain the Regent's permission to leave Gwalior. The Resident further told her that as the Regent's nomination to his high office in the first instance had met the approval of the British Government, he could not hear of his removal on slight grounds; and that, if she had any regard for the friendship of the Governor-General, the Regent should be retained in office.²⁷ That being the case, the Maharani replied, the government be better given 'over to the Regent in perpetuity', and that she might be otherwise provided for. Spier told her that such sentiments were not her own as she was too young to have thought of such matters seriously; and he considered them as those of her evil-advisers. To Dada Khasgiwala and

25 Ibid.

26 For. Pol. Cons. 7 June 1843, No. 48.

27 Ibid.

Sambaji Angria, who were also present at the court, the Resident expressed his own opinion in strong terms to them with regard to their proceedings.²⁸

On May 26, Ramrao Phalke, Udaji and Mulanji paid the Resident a visit with a message from the Maharani that she would attend to all his (the Resident's) wishes, excepting that of allowing Mama Saheb to act as the Regent of the state. The Resident told the above-named persons that it was in vain to make such a proposition to him and that he did not consider it coming from herself, but from those who were acting in defiance of the orders of their own and of the British Government. The Resident added that the Maharani, a girl of twelve or just entering her thirteenth year, could not be supposed to be competent to give an opinion as to who was the proper person to conduct the affairs of a great Government, and that it was their duty to make her understand this. The Resident further told the three chiefs that they and the other chiefs should not allow the affairs of the Government 'to go to ruin to please the caprice of a girl of the age of Ranee' and to indulge the desire for power of a person, namely Dada Khasgiwala, 'notoriously incompetent to conduct the affairs of the Government'.²⁹ When Ramrao, Udaji and Mulanji told that they and other chiefs had tried their utmost to persuade the Rani to listen to reason, but had failed and were at a loss what to do, the Resident asked them to persuade the Maharani to recall Mama Saheb to perform the duties of the Regent.³⁰

On May 31, 1843, a general representation (Mahzarnama) signed by all the chiefs and officers of the state was presented to the Maharani. It contained their grievances against Mama Saheb and declared their wish that

28 Ibid.

29 For. Pol. Cons. 14 June 1843, No. 401.

30 Ibid.

he should be removed from his office as Regent.³¹ Colonels Baptiste and Jacob reconstrated, and refused at first to sign it; when, however, Sambaji Agria who had only a few days ago led Mama to suppose that he had joined his party, affixed his signature to it, they placed theirs also. They were told that those who did not sign the 'Mahazarnama', should not be allowed to enter the palace, or attend Darbar.³² On the 1st of June, the Darbar wakil informed the Resident that Dada Khasgiwala had got the Maharani in his power and that the probability of the restoration of Mama Saheb to power was remote, unless the British Government came to his help. In the next evening i.e. on June 2, Ramrao Phalke and Mulanji were sent to the Resident with the usual message of implicit obedience in every point excepting that of restoring Mama Saheb to power. The wakil had been told to request the Resident to send a Residency orderly to Mama with the message that he should leave the camp. When the Resident declined to comply with the request, the wakil appeared to be in a great fright and told the Resident privately that the Maharani had abused him and called him an old traitor. If he failed to bring in an orderly from the Resident to turn out Mama from the camp, she would call him to account in the morning.³³ Again, in the afternoon of June 3, Ramrao and Mulanji visited the Resident and made the same request to him for an orderly to turn out Mama Saheb from the camp. The Resident, declined to do so.

On the morning of the 4th, there was an assembly of all the chiefs in the palace. After much consultation and discussion, Tarabai commanded each of the chiefs to send one of his principal officers accompanied by two or three servants of the palace, to direct Mama to leave his house and the camp. The mission went to Mama who, however, refused to leave the camp unless he

31 Ibid, Inclosure No.3.

32 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 56.

33 Ibid.

received his regular audience of leave from the Maharani and his dismissal as the uncle of the late Maharaja Jankoji Sindhia. When this was reported to the Maharani, she ordered the chiefs and officers to surround Mama Saheb's house with their troops, which they did. Much alarmed, Mama sent a messenger to the Resident to seek the latter's advice in this predicament.³⁴

Resident Spiers' repeated remonstrance against the removal of Mama Saheb had been based on the hope that the Gwalior army, particularly the brigades commanded by Colonels Baptiste and Jacob, and Major Alexander would lend their support to Mama in retaining his position as the Regent. The latter had promised to pay off the arrears of the troops and had already started disbursing two months' pay to them. Dada, in order to win over the soldiery to his side, made arrangements for another two months' pay to them.³⁵ On June 1, the vakil had informed the Resident that, with the exception of Col. Baptiste and his troops, none of the other chiefs or troops could be depended upon. Though they might entertain apparent predilection for Mama, but none of them, the vakil added, would incur the odium of being stigmatized as traitors for the sake of his cause, by refusing to obey the Rani, when called upon to do so.³⁶ Therefore, when on the 4th of June Mama's house was surrounded by the Gwalior troops, the Resident found it practically impossible to restore Mama Saheb to power by remonstrance alone; and if he were restored, he would not be able to retain his position without a force at his command. Ellenborough was at first prepared to afford personal protection to Mama Saheb in case he needed it, because this measure, hazardous as it was, seemed to the Governor-General to be consistent with the character of the British Government

34 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 58.

35 For. Pol. Cons. June 14 1843, No. 401.

36 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 56.

to adopt towards an officer raised to so high a station, with the full consent of the Governor-General and deposed for 'no alleged misconduct or even error in his administration'.³⁷ Soon, however, Ellenborough became 'sensible of the extreme inconvenience, and even danger' which must attend the British Government giving permanent protection, within the Gwalior State, to a subject of that state who had been deprived of the office of the Regent. The Governor-General, therefore, instructed the Resident to give advise to Mama Saheb to the effect that the latter would 'best consult his own interests' by retiring from Gwalior. The Resident was asked to make the representation to Mama in such a manner as should 'induce him to act upon it'.³⁸ The Resident, therefore, advised Mama 'to make a virtue of necessity', and submit himself to the Maharani's orders, stipulating that he should be allowed to leave the camp without any such molestation as would affect his honour or character.³⁹ Finding himself in a helpless state, Mama Saheb sent to acquaint the Maharani that he would leave the camp the next-day, i.e. on the 5th, on receiving assurances that no stain should be brought on his honour or characters along with the guarantee of Udaji Khatkia and Col. Jacob to this effect. Col. Jacob refused to give his guarantee, but the Maharani directed Udaji, and the vakil's brother, Sakharamrao Phalke, to be guarantee for the assurances Mama Saheb required, and to attend him out of the camp.⁴⁰ In the evening of the 5th, attended by the chiefs Mama Saheb left the camp and proceeded for about two miles southward of the camp.

After Mama Saheb had been expelled from the office of the Regent, no new appointment was made in his place. The post of Prime-minister, which had been

37 A. Law, India under Lord Ellenborough, No. 82.

38 For. Pol. Cons. 14 June 1843, No. 408.

39 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 58.

40 Ibid., No. 59.

abolished in the time of Mama Saheb by vesting all the powers of the Council of ministers in the Regent was now again revived and offered to Ramrao. But he declined to accept the new assignment saying that he was satisfied with his present post of the Darbar vakil.⁴¹ Thereafter the post of Prime-minister was left vacant, and all business were carried in the name of Maharani Tarabai who sat twice daily in the Darbar.⁴²

Ellenborough, while reluctantly acquiescing in the dismissal of Mama Saheb from the office of the Regent, instructed Resident Spier to retire to Dholepur on the pretext of avoiding excessive summer heat at Gwalior, and also not to hold any official communication with the person who might succeed the dismissed Regent. These two measures were intended by the Governor-General to impress the Maharani and her advisers with a sense of serious displeasure with which their conduct of dismissing Mama Saheb had been viewed by the British Government.⁴³ The rumour of the Resident's plan to withdraw to Dholepur caused 'a considerable consternation' at Gwalior. On June 10, 1843, Ramrao visited the Resident and informed him that the latter's intention of proceeding towards Dholepur had displeased the Maharani greatly and that she would look upon the Resident's going away as a withdrawal of the support of the British Government without which the Government at Gwalior could not exist. Ramrao also handed over to the Resident a letter from the Maharani in which she entreated him to make a representation to the Governor-General to remove all unfavourable impression from his mind regarding her late conduct in removing Mama Saheb from the office of the Regent. She added that the chiefs and herself were fully sensible of the great obligations they owed to the British Government for having acknowledge the claims

41 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 53.

42 Ibid, No. 77.

43 For. Pol. Cons. 9 September 1843, No. 188.

of the present Maharaja Jayajirao Sindhia to the succession, and that they were most anxious to have an efficient system of government of Gwalior.⁴⁴ In reply, the Resident told Ramrao and Mulanji that he was going to Dholepur for the sake of change of air and would return to Gwalior within ten days. When Ramrao remarked that was not the season at which the Resident admitted the truth of it, but said that as the Maharani and the Darbar vakil must have been aware of the fact that he (the Resident) was in the habit of moving about occasionally, the vakil should inform the Maharani that she must look upon the Resident's going to Dholepur on this occasion, as 'nothing more than what the Resident had stated', and that she 'must not think it was because he was offended with her that he went there'.⁴⁵ On June 13, Ramrao and Mulanji again met the Resident and communicated to him a message from the Maharani that she hoped that the Resident would consider the Maharaja and herself as his children, that he should obtain the forgiveness of the Governor-General for them, and that they would come to the Residency and entreat him not to go to Dholepur. Ramrao further told the Resident that no minister had been appointed nor anyone would be appointed in place of Mama Saheb without the consent of the British Government.⁴⁶ However, in spite of being repeatedly entreated by the Maharani not to leave Gwalior, the Resident left for Dholepur on June 16.

The Governor-General, however, knew that it would be very difficult for the Resident to reconcile the conflicting measures, viz. discontinuing official intercourse with the Gwalior Darbar, and remaining for long at Dholepur. Yet, the two measures were calculated by the Governor-General to excite a 'vague apprehension' in the minds of the Maharani and her advisers

44 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 64, Inclosure No.1.

45 Ibid, No. 64.

46 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 65.

regarding the future course of action to be adopted by the British Government, and consequently to lead the party in power at Gwalior to adopt 'moderate counsels' so as not to antagonise the British further. One of the measures which the Governor-General expected the Maharani and her advisers to adopt was the retention of Ramrao in the office of the Darbar wakil, as Ramrao would be 'agreeable to the Resident' to communicate with the Darbar. Although Ramrao did not exhibit much firmness in his conduct in the late transaction, or any 'very valuable fidelity to his declared patron, Mama Saheb', Ellenborough considered the retention of Ramrao as the Darbar wakil 'a point it would be desirable to gain'. It would be easier to retain some influence in the administration of Gwalior through Ramrao than through any other person. The Governor-General, however, held the view that British influence in the administration of Gwalior would be infructuous without having any superintending control over the Maharani. The degree of power which she was allowed to exercise made her all-powerful for no minister, whether appointed by the British or the chiefs themselves, would, without 'managing her', long retain his station. The Governor-General's policy was that in the absence of an 'ostensible minister' at Gwalior, the Resident should hold direct communication with the Maharani, which would give the British a controlling influence over the Sindhia's government. Ellenborough advised the Resident to evince 'a strong personal interest' in the welfare and happiness of the Maharani in his communications with her in order to give her 'confidence in the loyalty and sincerity of the advice' that the Resident might give her. The Governor-General's view was that the Maharani was 'a very sensitive and somewhat impetuous girl', but that she was by 'no means without a good disposition', and that, 'with her character, any thing may be made of her, according to the manner in which she was approached and treated'. It was upon this supposition that the Governor-General wished the Resident to proceed in his attempt to exert influence

over the Maharani. Preliminary to it, it was requisite that the Resident should obtain 'accurate information of what passes within the palace' and for this purpose he was required to secure the services of anyone immediately about the person of the Maharani and having any influence over her.⁴⁷ Thus, it was with the object of 'managing the Maharanee' that the Governor-General desired the Resident to terminate his stay at Dholepur at anytime when he might deem it expedient to return to Gwalior.

Soon, however, the Governor-General found to his utter dismay that it was not so easy as he thought either to manage the Maharani or to exert British influence in the administration of Gwalior. Although no successor to the office of the dismissed Mama Saheb nor a prime-minister had been appointed, the man who virtually guided the affairs of the state from behind the Maharani, was Dada Khasgiwala. By virtue of his office of the Keeper of the House-hold, and his old age, Dada had direct access to the Maharani and the other ladies of the royal family. The Maharani was a minor girl of about thirteen, having no education and no experience in the management of the affairs of the state, and, therefore, the ladies of the palace advised her to act under the guidance and advice of Dada whom they regarded as the faithful servant of the state.

Mama Saheb's dismissal from the Gwalior Darbar was viewed with intense dissatisfaction by Ellenborough. In a letter dated June 3, 1843, he said that Mama Saheb had been appointed Regent by the British Government with general concurrence of the Gwalior chiefs and therefore, it was impossible for the British government to acquiesce in his removal, without assigning any reason for such a measure. The Governor-General added that in preferring one minister or Regent of Gwalior to another, the British Government had no

47 For. Pol. Cons. 9 September 1843, No. 188.

object but the good of the Sindhia's state. The frontier of the territories belonging to the British Government, and those of the Gwalior state, being, for the most part, coterminous, the Governor-General thought it a matter of paramount importance that there should exist at Gwalior a government willing, and able, to preserve tranquillity along that extended line. The British Government, Ellenborough said, could not permit 'the growing up of a lax system of rule, generating habits of plunder along its frontier.' Its duty to its own subjects imperatively required that it should interfere effectually to maintain the public peace by all such means as might appear best calculated to secure that essential object. The Governor-General desired to adopt the necessary measures for this purpose in cordial co-operation with the authorities of the Gwalior state and in his view, this co-operation could have been easily secured from them under the regency of Mama Saheb. Now that Mama Saheb had been removed, the Governor-General said, the Gwalior state would be held responsible for all such interruptions of the public peace as might arise out of the mal-administration of its dominions.⁴⁸

But the Governor-General's queer logic contained in his letter that only Mama Saheb was capable of maintaining the public peace at Gwalior and that the cordial relations between it and the British Government depended only upon retaining him as the Regent, was not acceptable to the Maharani and her advisers. While stating in her letter of June 19, 1843, to the Governor-General all the circumstances that had compelled her to dismiss Mama Saheb, she expressed a hope that this incident should not stand in the way of the friendly relations between the governments of Sindhia and the British. She appreciated the wish on the part of the Governor General to see Gwalior a well-governed state, and for this purpose she was willing to adopt the measures stated by him in his

letter viz. the establishment of an efficient government, and the suppression of all disturbances within Gwalior. She also assured the Governor-General that all border disputes between the Sindhian State and the British Government would be amicably settled. But the Maharani did not share the views of the Governor-General that the British Government should 'interfere effectually' for the proper execution of the above measures. The Maharani sincerely wished to cultivate the friendship of the British Government, but certainly not at the cost of the independence of her state. In concluding her letter she said, "The enlightened policy of your Lordship's Government renders the considerations of the means by which the independence of this state can be improved, an object of importance".⁴⁹ The very tone of the letter was an assertion of the independent status of Gwalior state, and it made a hint to the Governor General that the Sindhia's government was capable of conducting its affairs and maintaining public peace in the territories under its jurisdiction without any interference by the British Government.

Under the circumstances, Ellenborough realised that it would be very difficult for the Resident to manage the Maharani. Instead, the Governor-General rested his hope of extending the British influence in the administration of Gwalior on the already manifest disunity among the chiefs there. It was reported that Dada suspected the fidelity of Col. Baptiste and Col. Jacob. Dada wanted to replace the latter's troops from the duty of guarding the front gate of the palace by those of the Maharaj Campoo who were devoted to Dada's cause. The charge of the front gate of the palace was considered a post of honour which the Jacob's troops had held for many years, and therefore, a clash between the troops of the Maharaj Campoo and those of Jacob was apprehended in case Dada made an attempt to remove the latter from the front gate of the

⁴⁹ Gwalior Further Papers, No. 70.

palace. It was also reported that Dada wished to remove Col. Baptiste from the command of his brigade, in which case also a serious disturbance would take place.⁵⁰ The Governor-General was delighted at the 'prospect of a collision' between the troops of Dada and those of the Colonels Baptiste and Jacob, as he hoped that the Resident would be entreated by the Maharani and the principal chiefs to return to Gwalior to settle the Government.⁵¹ Therefore, on June 27, 1843, the Governor-General countermanded his previous instruction to the Resident which required the latter to return to Gwalior with a view to managing the Maharani through a direct communication with her, by a new one prohibiting the Resident from returning to Gwalior until some Government should be created there, having the appearance of good intentions, and giving the promise of stability, or until the Maharani and the chiefs might 'eventually call upon' the Resident's assistance in enabling them to form such a Government.⁵²

However, the events at Gwalior did not assume such dangerous dimension as to call for British intervention. Some minor incidents took place, but they had their origin 'more in the struggles of faction for power than from any idea of hostility towards the British government'.⁵³ The battalions attached to Col. Baptiste deserted him for non-receipt of their arrears, and joined Dada's party which, in fact, was the Maharani's party. Baptiste was, however, not removed from the management of the Chanderi district. For the same reason one of the Jacob's regiments, the Rama Paltan, deserted him. With the Maharani's permission it was placed under the command of Baba, the husband of Dada's sister. The sepoys of the several corps ill-treated the European and

50 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 67.

51 A Law. Op. cit., p. 382.

52 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 68.

53 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 77.

Eurasian officers by whom they were commanded. This, however, had nothing to do with the anti-British feeling. Dada also made some administrative changes with a view to secure to the Maharani the services of the loyal chiefs. On July 29, 1843, Ramrao Phalke was relieved of his office of the Darbar vakil and Atmaram, the former Darbar vakil, whom the British Government considered as being opposed to its interests and who had been dismissed on the representation of the Resident Cavendish in 1833, was re-appointed in his place. Ramrao's agent with the Resident at Dholepur was also recalled.⁵⁴

At the same time, Dada sincerely desired that the Resident should return to Gwalior. On June 30, the Maharani had written a letter to the Resident reminding him of his assurance to Ramrao and Mulanji when they had met him at Dholepur, that he had removed to his present place of residence for the sake of change of air and that he would return within ten days. As his absence had exceeded that time, the Maharani said, she anxiously expected his return to Gwalior.⁵⁵ On August 6, Udajirao Khatkia, an old and respectable chief, was deputed by the Maharani to invite the Resident back to Gwalior. The Resident told Udaji that the disorganized state of the affairs at Gwalior and of the army in particular, prevented him from returning to Gwalior. When Udaji said that the Maharani, in a private interview with him, had desired him to inform the Resident that until the latter's return to Gwalior, affairs would remain in the same unsettled state as it existed then, and as she was desirous of attending to the wishes of the Resident, she trusted that the latter would consider the subject seriously and return with Udaji. At this, the Resident replied that he knew that the Maharani had all along been willing to be guided by the advice of the British representative at her court, but that the whole desire and aim of those who had come into power at Gwalior, appeared to excite

54 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 81.

55 Ibid, No. 77. Enclosure

commotion among the troops, unsettle long-established order of affairs and their whole proceedings were at variance with the friendly relations subsisting between Gwalior and the British. They had, the Resident said, reappointed the Amils of the Satmala and Ratangarh Singowli, who had been turned out of office by late Jankojirao Sindhia on the 'repeated representation of the British officers in Malwa'; they had dismissed from the office of the Darbar vakil Ramrao Phalke who was 'well-known as a friend of both Governments'; and had put into his place Atmaram, 'a person of notorious character' and who had formerly held that office, 'not certainly to the satisfaction of former Residents', and consequently had been deprived of it. The Resident said that he did not mention these circumstances with any intention of disputing the Maharani's right to employ or discharge such servants as she thought fit; but merely as 'indicating the feeling which characterized the proceedings of those who were now conducting the affairs of her government, so much at variance with the friendly intercourse' which had subsisted between the two governments for many years past, 'but more particularly during the whole of the rule of the late Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia'. The Resident further added that he felt assured that there would be no difficulty as to his return if an efficient administration was formed at Gwalior, some semblance of order and discipline established amongst the troops, and some indication given of the restoration of friendly feelings between the two governments. As the government at Gwalior had done nothing to excite the hostility of the British, Udaji could not guess what exactly the Resident desired from the Maharani and her advisers, and therefore, on August 11, he asked the Resident to express in writing on what terms the latter would return to Gwalior. The Resident, however, refused to give any such statement on the pretext that it might lead to 'prolonged and useless discussion'.⁵⁶ Again, on August 15, Udaji came to the Resident and

56 For. Pol. Cons. 9 September 1843, No. 204.

asked the latter to accompany him back to Gwalior. Once again, the Resident repeated all that he had said to Udaji on the latter's first visit on August 8. Disappointed, Udaji left Dholepur on August 16. Thus, for a week Udaji had stayed at Dholepur persuading the Resident to return to Gwalior; but the old chief's mission failed because of the evasive and truculent attitude of the Resident.

Meanwhile, on August 10, 1843, the Governor-General-in-Council adopted a resolution which, after reviewing the recent developments at the court of Gwalior and their probable evil effects on the adjoining British territories, authorised the Governor-General to assemble a force in a camp of exercise at Agra.⁵⁷ Ellenborough thought that 'the continued existence of a hostile Government at Gwalior would be inconsistent with the continuance of the permanent influence of the British in India'. He was, therefore, most anxious to place things in their former position by management and not by actual force. He hoped that the mere rumour of the preparations of the British force at Agra might 'bring things right' at Gwalior, and give the British 'a friendly government' there.⁵⁸

No doubt the news of the British troops being held in readiness at Agra, created a consternation at Gwalior. Dada made sincere efforts to avoid a rupture with the British. He urged Ramrao who was in the good book of the British Government, to enter into a written agreement with the latter. Dada also expected him to do his utmost to re-establish the usual amicable relations between the two states. Obviously, Dada desired to present this document to the Resident and prevent the British force from marching upon Gwalior. But Ramrao refused to give any written assurances, although he agreed to use his

57 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 69. .

58 Colchester, Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough, p. 384. . . .

utmost exertions to restore the friendly understanding between the two governments. At the sametime Dada wished Sambaji, another chief, whom the British viewed friendly to them, to take upon himself the office of Prime Minister while Dada himself would act as his subordinate. Sambaji agreed to accept the post of Prime-minister on condition that Dada would not interfere in any affairs of the state, that Ramrao should be restored to his office of the darbar-vakil, and that Dada accompanied by all the chiefs of the Gwalior state, should go to Dholepur to beg forgiveness for his offences; if he was not pardoned by the Resident, he would be dealt with agreeably to the wishes of the British Government.⁵⁹ But all these propositions of Sambaji seemed not only humiliating for a respectable chief like Dada who had done nothing to excite the animosity of the British government, but struck at the very root of the independent status of Gwalior. Thus, Dada's plant to placate the British government by placing at the helm of affairs of the state a chief agreeable to the British, failed.

Meanwhile, the British Resident, viewing the situation with his usual perspicacity, felt that the pro-British chiefs would use every exertion in their power to remove the Khasgiwala from office. But the Governor-General thought that mere dismissal of Dada would not be sufficient to afford security against similar intrigues in future and to place the relations between the two governments upon a satisfactory footing. The Governor-General told the Resident that the conduct of Dada in deposing Mama Saheb and in restoring 'persons obnoxious' to the British government to their offices, had been such as to deserve and demand 'exemplary punishment' at the hands of the Maharani. Banishment with a heavy fine, or in lieu thereof, personal restraints, appeared to the Governor-General to be the most effectual punishment which would meet

59 For. Pol. Cons. 16 September 1843, No. 124.

the cause of justice in respect of Dada. The latter mode of punishment, the Governor-General added, would be the most effectual if the Maharani entrusted the custody of Dada's person to the British Government. Until such punishment had been inflicted upon Dada and the persons obnoxious to the British government expelled, the Governor-General desired the Resident not to return to Gwalior. In Ellenborough's view, however, that mere punishing Dada and the Resident's return to Gwalior would not solve the pressing problem of Gwalior. The numbers of the Gwalior army were out of all proportion to the means, as well as to the requirements, of the Gwalior state. Consequently the soldiers dared resort to acts of insubordination and mutiny. Gradual reduction of the army was therefore deemed essential by the Governor-General if the new administration was to be placed on a stable footing. Direct communication between the Resident and the Maharani was also considered necessary by Ellenborough for the welfare of the Gwalior state. He desired that after the Resident's return to Gwalior, all important measures of the Government should be adopted after communication with him, and that no chief whatever should be suffered to stand between the British Minister and the natural heads of the Gwalior State. Thus, all the abovementioned measures, viz. punishing Dada, making a reduction in the size of the Gwalior army, and allowing the Resident to have a direct communication with the Maharani for the purpose of giving her advice on all important measures of the state, were deemed essential by Ellenborough for the preservation of peace within, and the welfare of, the Gwalior State; and, therefore, he was even prepared to use force for the adoption of those measures. Ellenborough made no secret of his intention when he wrote to the Resident on August 8, 1843 :

We desire nothing from the Gwalior State, but the assurance of peace upon our frontier, but that peace it is our duty to our own subjects to establish; and the Governor-General-in-Council will not hesitate to use the force at his disposal for the just object of compelling the adoption of such measures against the evils they have so long sustained from the injurious conduct of the ill-administered districts belonging to Gwalior.⁶⁰

However, the chances of removing Dada from the management of affairs at Gwalior seemed not very bright when he took all precautionary measures against any attempt to overthrow the present government. Tantia Pakira, an old and confidential servant of the family and employed in the interior of the palace for many years, was suspected of communicating to the Maharani the desire of the British government and the chiefs friendly to it that Dada should be removed from his office. Tantia Pakira was, therefore, forbidden from entering the interior of the palace. Ramrao Phalke was also kept under house-arrest. Jaswantrao Ghorepare, the father of the Maharani, was nominated governor of the fortress of Gwalior, and he appointed as his deputy Bawanji Nana, the brother-in-law of Dada. At the sametime, Dada tried to conciliate the principal chiefs and officers. He paid the troops two months' additional pay, and made a number of promotions among the native officers and men. He also increased the pay of the men of the artillery and infantry.⁶¹ In granting these concessions to the soldiers, Dada's intention was to guard against any possibility of their defection to the enemy, and not to prepare for a conflict with the British. The Resident held the view that Dada could not have ever 'seriously contemplated so great an act of

60 For. Pol. Cons. 9 September 1843, No. 205.

61 Gwalior Further Papers No. 91.

folly as that of opposing the British'.⁶² In fact, Dada had not yet given up the hope of conciliating the British. Towards the end of September 1843, the Maharani held conferences for several times with the prominent chiefs such as Babu Saheb Sitolia Deshmukh, Sambaji Angria, Udaji Khatkia, Mulanji, Jaswantrao Ghorepare, Col. Jacob and Munshi Balwantrao, to discuss the ways and means for resolving the deadlock in the relations between Gwalior and the British Government. At one such conference, Dada asked, in the Maharani's name, the opinions of the chiefs as to be the best mode of re-establishing the friendly understanding between the British Government and the Gwalior state. He himself suggested that the Governor-General would soon arrive at Agra and that all the chiefs accompanied by the Resident should meet him and endeavour to dispel all misunderstanding between the two governments. At this, the Deshmukh said that they would go to meet the Governor-General only if Ramrao and Dada accompanied them. Dada replied that the Rani could not allow him to accompany them as he bore the blame of all the measures that had led to the present stalemate. At a second meeting, Col. Jacob proposed that the Maharaja and Maharani should accompany Dada and ask forgiveness for the latter. But Sambaji Angria and Deshmukh opposed this proposal on the ground that the head of the Gwalior State would be disgraced in case the Rani and the Maharaja failed to persuade the Governor-General in forgiving Dada. Instead, the chiefs urged, Ramrao should be restored to office and employed in the present exigency.⁶³ Dada agreed to this proposal and on September 27, 1843, Ramrao was reinstated in his former office of the Darbar wakil and on the night of the same day he left for Dholepur. On the 29th he met the Resident and told him that he had no hope of effecting any adjustment of the

62 For. Pol. Cons. 16 September 1843, No. 124.

63 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 96.

differences between the two states, and that his reason for coming to Dholepur was merely to escape from a place where his life was daily in imminent danger.⁶⁴

On the very day, Ramrao had been restored to his former position of the Darbar wakil, the emissaries of Dada seized the 'pandits' belonging to Sambaji Angria. They confessed that Narainrao and Sakharamrao, diwans of Bapu Sitolia and Sambaji respectively, and those two chiefs themselves, had planned to seize and confine Dada Khasgiwala with the help of the soldiers. On the basis of this information, Dada decided to seize Sambaji and Bapu Sitolia; but on being advised by Jaswantrao Ghorepare, the Rani's father, and some other advisers, he gave up the plan. He, however, kept Narainrao and Sakharamrao in confinement. Sambaji and Bapu Sitolia felt humiliated at this incident, and took up their residence in a garden belonging to Balabai, with the intention of leaving the camp. The Maharani sent persons of 'rank and influence' of the darbar to persuade them to return but without effect. Thereafter, the officers of the Maharaj Campoo met Bapu Sitolia in the morning of 1st October, and persuaded him to return. But he refused to comply with their request adding that they had covered him and themselves with disgrace in having the two diwans seized. Shortly after this interview between the officers of the Maharaj Campoo and Deshmukh, the five battalions of the said regiment turned their guns upon the palace and demanded that the diwans of Sambaji Angria and Deshmukh, along with Dada Khasgiwala be handed over to them. Dada was in a state of great alarm, and sent repeated messages to the officers and soldiers of the Maharaj Campoo to the effect that if they returned to their lines he would give up to them the said two diwans. But the soldiers refused to return to their lines.

64 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 97.

Dada then summoned Col. Jacob, Jaswantrao Bhau, and other chiefs to his rescue. When Jacob arrived, Dada threw himself at his feet and begged the Colonel to rescue him from his present difficulties. Jacob assured Dada by saying that while he had troops to command, he would not allow a hair of Dada's head to be touched. In the evening, Udaji, Mulanji and some other chiefs met the Deshmukh and repeatedly requested him to return to his residence, to which he at last agreed. On the morning of the 2nd, the Deshmukh asked the battalions who had besieged the palace, to return to their lines. At first, they refused to return. Subsequently, however, they obeyed; but at the same time they upbraided the Deshmukh for his want of firmness and courage.⁶⁵

On October 9, 1843, Ramrao handed over to the Resident a Kharita from the Rani, which contained 'a very kind invitation' to return to Gwalior. Ramrao also informed the Resident that if the latter promised to return to Gwalior, then the Rani would come out to the bank of the Chambal and beg forgiveness of the Dada's offences against the British Government, and that in future he would not be allowed to interfere in the affairs of the Gwalior Government, but remain at the palace in charge of his duties as Khasgiwala or the Comptroller of all private disbursements of the Raja and his family. Ramrao had also been empowered by the Maharani to inform the Resident that she would appoint such ministers as would be likely to afford the British Government satisfaction and that she would nominate them in consultation with the Resident. Resident Spiers replied that he could not listen to such proposition and communicated to Ramrao the Governor-General's instructions regarding Dada, viz. banishment with a heavy fine, or in lieu thereof, personal restraint. The Resident added that if Dada was banished, he would be made

over to the custody of the British Government. At this, Ramrao, of his own accord, suggested that Dada should be allowed to leave Gwalior without suffering any disgrace, and to proceed to the Deccan to settle at Jamgaon, a village belonging to the Gwalior Darbar. But the Resident insisted that Dada must not live in any part of the Gwalior territory, and that the Maharani must levy a heavy fine on him. The Resident recommended Benaras as a suitable place of residence for Dada and told Ramrao that if delay occurred in sending him to Benaras, the Resident could not say what demands might be made in regard to Dada. Ramrao was put in a state of alarm by these words of the Resident and the latter thought it 'a fitting opportunity' to reply to the Maharani's Kharita.⁶⁶ In his reply, the Resident referred to the Governor-General's wishes regarding Dada. The Resident added that out of friendship and consideration for the Maharani, the Governor-General would not press on her the return of Mama Saheb to Gwalior; but should delay occur in taking the measures against Dada as prescribed by the Governor-General, the latter would not hesitate to exert his power for the attainment of this object, and the result would be attended with serious consequences.⁶⁷ On October 13, the Resident read to Ramrao a copy of his answer to the Maharani's Kharita and thereafter delivered it to the Vakil for onward transmission to the Maharani. Ramrao expressed great alarm at what might be the consequence to himself on the Rani's learning that the Resident had declined returning excepting on the terms contained in the Resident's reply. Ramrao at first declined to forward the Resident's letter; but, on finding that the Resident was determined to do so himself, Ramrao agreed to transmit it. On the 19th Ramrao informed the Resident that he had delivered the latter's Kharita to Dada, but that Dada had not delivered it or communicated

66 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 102.

67 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 292.

its contents to the Maharani. Apprehending that the adamant attitude of the Resident might be taken advantage of by the chiefs opposed to him, Dada tried to detach the battalions of the Maharaj Campoo from the command of Bapu Sitolia Deshmukh. The soldiers were offered their arrears, and directed to leave the camp which they refused to do. On October 24, armed guards were placed upon the battalions with the view of showing them that they were no longer under the command of the Deshmukh, but that the Government had assumed it. When the battalions concerned refused to obey the orders of the Government, Dada ordered them to be surrounded by other troops. Although the battalions of the Maharaj Campoo were surrounded, they were not attacked, for the whole of the troops, with the exception of those under the command of Col. Jacob and Major Alexander, were ready to join the Maharaj Campoo.⁶⁸ Besides, the battalions of the Maharaj Campoo were emboldened to defy the Government orders by the declaration of Bapu Sitolia Deshmukh that he would place himself at their vanguard. On the 28th, Sambaji Angria and Ramrao Phalke, joined the Deshmukh. These chiefs declared that their object was to cause the surrender of Dada Khasgiwala into their hands, with a view to re-establish the usual amicable relations between the British and their own Government. On the same day Dada was surrendered to the Maharaj Campoo who kept him in confinement.⁶⁹ The pro-British chiefs, however, could not hand the Khasgiwala to the Resident and held deliberations amongst themselves as to what should be done with him. The Maharani's party took advantage of it and gained over a large number of troops to their cause. The Grand Park of Artillery (Jhinsi), with a battalion, named Fateh Paltan, attached to it, decided to oppose the chiefs and troops who had confined Dada. The Rama Paltan which had deserted Col. Jacob's

68 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 207.

69 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 208.

brigade, and four battalions belonging to Major Alexander, also joined the Maharani's party. They all demanded not only the release of Dada but also the surrender of Sambaji and Ramrao to them. The pro-British chiefs decided not to release Dada, while the Maharani's party was firmly determined not to allow him to be handed over to the British. A tension prevailed among the troops, yet the two groups did not dare start an open conflict as they were not sure of which side the third group would join. It was led by Col. Jacob, and was the strongest and most influential party. But the Colonel with his ten battalions and fifty guns stood neutral.

The Governor-General had all this time been hoping that the pro-British chiefs alone would be able to hand over Dada to the British Government without the armed intervention of the latter. When, however, those chiefs failed to remove Dada from Gwalior, Ellenborough posed himself as the guardian of the young Maharani. He informed the Resident at Gwalior that Dada Khasgiwala, in withholding from the Maharani the Kharita addressed to her by the Resident, was guilty of 'an offence of the most criminal character against the State of Gwalior', amounting to 'a supercession of the Maharanee's authority, and the transference of all power, in an unlawful manner, to himself'. The Resident was instructed to communicate to the chiefs at Gwalior that the Governor-General considered Dada and 'him alone, to be the obstacle to the re-establishment of friendly relations between the British Government and the State of Gwalior'. On the delivery of Dada to the Resident, or on his expulsion from the territories of Gwalior being duly notified to the Resident, the latter was to announce to the Maharani and the chiefs that all obstacles to the return of the British representative to the court of Gwalior would be considered removed. The Resident was also asked to make it known to the Maharani that long ere the Governor-General's arrival at Agra, he might be informed that the Resident had been enabled to resume his position at Gwalior.

under the instructions he had received from the Governor-General.⁷⁰ Lord Ellenborough desired that the Resident should take an early opportunity of making known, not through any written official communication, but in an emphatic way shorn of ambiguity, to the Gwalior Darbar, that in the event of the British Government being compelled to adopt military measures for the preservation of the peace of the common frontier of the two states, the British Government would deem it just and expedient, that the Gwalior state should defray the amount of the charges so incurred.⁷¹

The Resident sent Maulavi Jafir Ali, Mir Munshi of the Residency, to Gwalior with a letter to Maharani Tarabai. In this letter, the Resident advised the Maharani to expel Dada from the territories of Gwalior, otherwise the long and intimate friendship subsisting between the British Government and the state of Gwalior would be interrupted.⁷² On November 5, 1843, the Munshi presented to the Rani the Resident's letter which was read in the presence of the chiefs. The Munshi also explained the Governor-General's wishes regarding Dada Khasgiwala and stated that the delivery of his person to the Resident at Dholepur was the only means of preventing the advance of the British troops and restoring friendship between Gwalior and the British Government. The Maharani said that Dada had been confined by her orders; but the Munshi requested that he should be sent to Dholepur to be delivered to the Resident. At this, the Maharani remarked that this was the first instance that a prisoner of Gwalior State had been demanded by the British Government. The Munshi rejoined that this was the first instance in which a subject of Gwalior had effected an interruption of the amicable relations

70 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 200.

71 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 201.

72 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 213.

between the two Governments. The Maharani then told the Munshi that there had been nothing in the proceedings of the Darbar, which could authorize the advance of British troops across the frontier. She further asked the Munshi what was the necessity of sending the troops when the British Government knew well that she could not oppose them. When the Munshi replied that the troops would punish recalcitrant elements who had caused the rupture between the two governments, the Maharani said that Dada described as the evil genius by the British Government had been confined, that he would receive any punishment which the Resident thought proper, and that now the Resident could return to Gwalior. But the Munshi said that unless Dada was handed over to the British authorities, the Resident could not return. The Maharani told the Residency Munshi that she would give her opinion on the subject on the next day; and accordingly, the Munshi attended the Darbar on November 6. When the chiefs assembled, Balwantrao, the Mir Munshi of the Darbar asked the Residency Munshi to name the persons for their alleged complicity in assisting Dada Khasgiwala. Jafir Ali replied that he had been directed to demand merely the surrender of the Khasgiwala, upon whose delivery the Resident would return. The Maharani wished the Residency Munshi to remain at Gwalior for a couple of days. At this Jafir Ali replied that if the Maharani would state that the Khasgiwala should be given up in four days, he would of course remain, but that otherwise, he must return to Dholepur immediately. The Maharani said that Dada Khasgiwala had been confined by the Maharaj Campoo and, therefore, she could not promise that he should be given up.⁷³

On November 7, 1843, the Resident wrote to the Maharani pointing out that at first she had been requested to punish Dada Khasgiwala, or to confine him; but that his gross misconduct in detaining the Resident's Kharita of

13 October addressed to her, had rendered it necessary that he should be banished from the country altogether. The Resident further added that as the presence of the Residency Munshi at Gwalior would only tend to prolong the discussion, he had been directed to take with him the few remaining Residency servants at Gwalior and join the Resident at Dholepur.⁷⁴ The Resident expected that this would be interpreted by the Maharani and her advisers as a preliminary step of the British Government to sever diplomatic relations with Gwalior, and might compel her to deliver Dada to the Resident. The Maharani, however, remained unruffled and refused to surrender Dada to the British. In a letter dated November 9, 1843, to the Resident, she said that the British Government should not demand of her anything which would be derogatory to her dignity. Hitherto, she added, subjects of the Gwalior State giving offence to the English Government, had been punished by their own rulers and confined within the territories of Gwalior. In the case of Dada Khasgiwala also, the Maharani hoped, the British authorities would not depart from the said precedent. She, however, agreed to remove from employment Jaswantrao Bham, his brother Lala, Atmaram Pandit and Baldar Sing, who had incurred the displeasure of the English Government, and had been removed from their offices, but who had again been reinstated by Dada.⁷⁵ Thus Bapu Saheb Sitolia Deshmukh, Sambaji Angria, and Ramrao Phalke with the officers and men of the Maharaj Campoo, were the only individuals who had been active in the seizure of Khasgiwala. At the earnest request of Deshmukh and the other two chiefs within, the Resident addressed letters to the Maharani's father, to Udaji Khatkia, to Col. Jacob and to Maj. Alexander, calling upon them to use their best endeavours to assist the three chiefs in handing over Dada to the

74 Ibid., para. 19.

75 Inclosure, Gwalior Further Papers, No. 120.

British thereby putting down the present commotions, and restoring order to the state. But Ghorepare, the Maharani's father, and Udaji were attached to Khasgiwala's cause, while Col. Jacob wished to remain neutral. Mrs. Alexander, mother of Major Alexander, a slave-girl named Ratni, and the grand-mother of the Maharani, prevented Tarabi from acceding to Khasgiwala being delivered over to the British government. Thus, the chiefs friendly to the Company's Government were not strong enough to send Dada to the British custody at Agra, in the face of the large force belonging to Dada's faction, and in opposition to the wishes of the Maharani. Thus, the mission of the Mir-Munshi of Residency of persuading the Maharani in surrendering Dada Khasgiwala to the British Government failed; and the Resident in a letter of November 11, 1843, informed the Governor-General that the above object could not be achieved without the movement of the British army to the frontier, or into the Gwalior territory.⁷⁶ In a letter dated November 17, 1843, the Governor-General apprised the British Commander-in-Chief of the state of affairs at Gwalior, and expressed his opinion that the surrender of Dada to the British, could not be effected alone by those chiefs friendly to the British, as the artillery and the troops faithful to Dada, had decided to rescue him from the Maharaj Campoo. Therefore direct intervention of the British in aid of the chiefs willing to surrender Dada to the British was necessary. The Governor-General asked the Commander-in-Chief to make all preparations for a movement against Gwalior and, if necessary, to make a forward movement upon Gwalior, in order to preserve the Chief and troops friendly to the British.⁷⁷

Meanwhile, a vacancy had arisen in the Residency of Nagpur by the resignation of its Resident Major Wilkinson and the Calcutta Council decided

76 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 120.

77 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 266.

to remove Alexander Spiers, the Resident at Gwalior, to Nagpur. Gwalior was placed within the sphere of Lt. Col. Sleeman's agency and under him Lt. Sir Richard Shakespear was appointed permanent Resident at Gwalior. The Governor-General expected that the Darbar would feel it a sensible mark of displeasure to commit the immediate conduct of British affairs with them to younger hands than those to which they had hitherto been entrusted.⁷⁸ However, this change in the Residency of Gwalior, was not communicated to the Gwalior Darbar until December 7. On November 12, 1843 Resident Spiers wrote to the Maharani that he was about to move to Agra as there was no hope of the Governor-General's wishes regarding Dada Khasgiwala being complied with through the agency of the Resident. On the 13th the Maharani sent a reply to the Resident, requesting the latter to delay his departure and await the results of the mission of Udaji Khatkia who had been deputed by her to Dholepur to resolve the burning issue, i.e., the delivery of Dada Khasgiwala.⁷⁹ In reply to this letter of the Maharani, the Resident wrote on December 14, 1843, that nothing short of Khasgiwala's delivery to the British Government could restore friendship between Gwalior and the British. He declined to postpone his journey to Agra for which he left Dholepur on 15 November and arrived at Agra on the 17th.⁸⁰

The Resident's withdrawal to Agra forced the hands of the Maharani. On November 19, 1843, open hostilities commenced between the Maharaj Campoo and the Khasgiwala party. The artillery began cannonading on the Maharaj Campoo, and it continued till the morning of the next-day, when the Maharani

78 Letter to the Secret Committee, October 21, 1843.

79 Inclosures No. 1 & 2 in Gwalior Further Papers, No. 125.

80 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 126.

directed both the parties to discontinue firing.⁸¹ She then invited Col. Jacob who had not identified himself with either the Khasgiwala's party or the party opposing it, and sought his advice. The Colonel advised her to replace all the guards of the palace by men of his own regiments, which the Maharani did. Next, Jacob asked the Maharani to invite the three chiefs of the Maharaj Campoo, viz., Bapu Deshmukh, Sambaji and Ramrao to the palace and earn their confidence. When the three chiefs came, the Maharani treated them with distinction, requested them to stand by her side in such a crisis, and promised to be guided by their advice in future. They then urged upon the Maharani the propriety of confining the Khasgiwala's agent, Shyam Bhai and also Chamanrao, the chief of the artillery. When these two persons were confined by the orders of the Maharani, the three chiefs of the Maharaj Campoo put chains on the feet of Dada Khasgiwala and delivered him to the custody of Col. Jacob.⁸² Next, the Maharani deputed Sambaji and Ramrao to Agra to re-open negotiations with the Resident. Before they visited Resident Spiers, both Ramrao and Sambaji had sent a private message to the Resident requesting the latter to use his best endeavours to induce the Governor-General to be content with the punishment and confinement of Dada Khasgiwala within the Gwalior territories.⁸³ During their meeting with the Resident on 1st December, they again made the same request, adding that the Maharani had not the option of delivering up the Khasgiwala to the British, as the soldiers would not allow him to be given up. Resident Spiers replied that if this was the case, it would be necessary for the British Government to interfere, as it could never allow the Gwalior State to be governed by a mutinous, disorderly band of soldiers. He then told Sambaji and Ramrao to make inquiries and

81 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, 285. .

82 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 129.

83 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 131.

ascertain from their own observation, the extent of the preparations which were actually in progress, for the assembly and equipment of the British army; and he warned them that the whole of the expenses caused by these preparations would have to be defrayed by the Gwalior Government. The Resident further added that the Governor-General was expected to reach Agra on or about December 11, 1843, and that if before his arrival, Khasgiwala had not been surrendered, the Governor-General would be seriously displeased.⁸⁴ On December 2, when Sambaji and Ramrao again met the Resident, the latter told them that after prominent party they had taken in confining the Khasgiwala and in endeavouring to induce the Maharani to surrender him to the British authorities, they must not allow Khasgiwala to remain in the Gwalior territory; for should he be ever set at liberty, he would take revenge for what they had done against him.⁸⁵ Both Sambaji and Ramrao agreed with what the Resident said, and they urged him to write in strong and plain terms to the Maharani demanding the surrender of Dada Khasgiwala. Accordingly, the Resident informed Maharani Tarabai through a letter dated December 2, that no good result could be expected from any discussion with Ramrao and Sambaji. The demand of the English Government was that Dada Khasgiwala should be made over to them and, until that was done, the Resident added, it was impossible that friendship could be restored between the British and the Gwalior State.⁸⁶

On December 11, 1843, Governor-General Lord Ellenborough reached Agra. On the next day he wrote to the Maharani expressing his intention of moving forward the British armies for the purpose of securing 'the future tranquillity of the common frontier of the two states', the maintenance of

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

86 Inclosure No.2 in Gwalior Further Papers No. 131.

order within the territories of Sindhia', and for conducting the government of those territories' in accordance with the long established relations of amity towards the British Government'.⁸⁷ On the receipt of this letter, the Maharani immediately despatched Dada under an escort of a few horsemen to Agra to be delivered to the Governor-General. In a letter to the Governor-General, she expressed a hope now that the Khasgiwala had been surrendered to the British, the march of the British army upon Gwalior would be postponed, and the Resident would return and resume his duties at Gwalior. She assured the Governor-General that when the Resident would return, she would conduct the affairs of the Gwalior State in consultation with him. While she expressed gratification at the Governor-General's remark that the relations between the British Government and Gwalior would be regulated by the treaties in force for forty-years between the two states, and hoped that the Governor-General would oblige her by his valuable advice on matters relating to the welfare of the Gwalior State, she at the same time said that she could not part with the counsels of those chiefs of the state who from the time of the former Maharajas of Gwalior, had remained faithful to the State.⁸⁸ Before this letter reached the Governor-General in the afternoon of December 18, Dada Khasgiwala had been delivered to him in the morning of the very same day. The Governor-General ordered Dada to be kept in the fort of Agra.⁸⁹

87 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 308.

88 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 137.

89 Letter to the Secret Committee, December 19, 1843.

CHAPTER - VIII

THE TREATY OF 1844

Lord Ellenborough was gratified by the delivery of Dada Khasgiwala to the charge of the British Government. The Governor-General regarded this event as the best indication, on the part of Maharani Tarabai and her advisers, of the disposition to restore the normal relations of friendship between Gwalior and the British Government. The Governor-General was, however, determined to give it 'a yet firmer basis' by the conclusion of an arrangement with the Sindhia's Government which would settle a few points still pending to be adjusted. Ellenborough informed Tarabai that in a conference at the Governor-General's camp at Dholepur, Resident Sleeman would discuss these points with Sambaji Angria, Ramrao Phalke or any other chief whom the Regent might depute for the purpose; and then prepare the final arrangement to be submitted to her for her approval. The Governor-General also expressed a desire on his part to confer personally with the Regent upon the points remaining to be adjusted.¹ He, however, did not tell her what these points were. On the very day, i.e., December 18, 1843, Ellenborough wrote this letter to Tarabai, he sent a memorandum to the Resident which contained the points in question. The first was to obtain security for the future tranquillity of the common frontier between the territories of Gwalior and those of the British. This could be attained, the Governor-General said, by increasing the amount of the Contingent force which, under the command of British officers, had rendered useful services to the Gwalior State. As the amount of the Contingent force would be increased, so sufficient funds for its payment should be provided by the assignment of the revenue of certain districts. These districts should be selected in such a manner so that they might, as far as practicable, adjoin the British frontier.

1 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 138.

The British Government should also be given, over the districts of which the revenue should be so assigned, such authority as should secure the payment of the revenues to the agreed purposes, and also conduce to the good management of the districts. The second object which Lord Ellenborough had in view was the reduction of the army of Gwalior. The number of troops now maintained by the Gwalior State was altogether disproportionate to its revenue and to its real needs. An army, for which there was no legitimate employment, and always allowed to remain with large arrears of pay which it sometimes had obtained by recourse to measures inconsistent with discipline, had, in fact, become all-powerful. Its existence, therefore, must at all times be a source of embarrassment to the Gwalior Government, and of portentous possibilities to surrounding states. Ellenborough remarked that protected against foreign invasion, and assured also under treaty, of the effectual aid of the British Government against those who might prove to be refractory, the Gwalior State required a military force only for the purpose of preserving internal tranquillity. The present large army should, therefore, be reduced within reasonable limits. The Governor-General hoped that the Gwalior Government would be able to complete this measure without any military help from the British Government. Should, however, such aid be required, British armies would be at hand to give aid to the Regent. Next, the Governor-General thought it expedient to make provision for the proper maintenance of the Maharani after the Maharaja would attain his majority; and in his view Jahgirs producing a revenue of three lacs of Rupees, should be set apart for that object. Another point which the Governor-General desired to settle with the Sindhia's Government was that debt of about twenty-one lacs of Rupees due by it to the British Government. Of this, a sum of about ten lacs was now due to the British Government on account of the Contingent and another one lac on other accounts. The remaining ten lacs were required for defraying the

cost of the British armies which Lord Ellenborough had brought for the purpose of re-establishing friendly relations with the Gwalior State. Under the Treaty of Burhanpur (1804), the British Government was bound to employ 6000 infantry, the cost of which was not chargeable to the Sindhia's Government. But the force brought together, Ellenborough said, was more than three times than required by the Treaty of Burhanpur, and, hence, ten lacs were chargeable to the Sindhia's Government. If the Gwalior State was in a position to defray this sum of Rupees twenty-one lacs at once, it would be well. If, however, it was unable to do so, proper arrangements should now be made for defraying the whole debt, by instalments, in five years; and that the revenue of districts, to be specified, should be assigned to the British Government, to secure the regular payment of the instalments. Ellenborough asked Resident Sleeman to select for this purpose such districts as adjoined the British frontier.²

On 19 December, 1843, the proposed conference in which the above points were to be discussed, was held in the Governor-General's tent. On behalf of the Gwalior Government, Ramrao alone, with Bajirao, the Darbar vakil of the Residency, attended. Sambaji Angria was unable to attend on account of his illness. At this meeting Resident Sleeman was also absent. Besides the Governor-General, assistant Resident Richard Shakespeare and F. Currie, Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General, were present. When the conference began, the Governor-General stated to Ramrao that means should be taken for placing the affairs at Gwalior on a better footing, and for preventing the possibility of a recurrence of those proceedings which had caused the present interruption of friendly relations. The Governor-General wished that Ramrao should speak freely his opinion on

2 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 139.

the different subjects which would be brought before him. At this, Ramrao said that both the Maharaja and the Regent were minor and the advice of evil counsellors had brought things to the present unhappy posture. He then said that it was incumbent on the British Government to uphold and protect the State of Gwalior by the treaties with it, to which the Governor-General had referred to in his Kharitas to the Maharani. The Governor-General then asked Ramrao if he himself was acquainted with the Treaty of Burhanpur and its several stipulations. Ramrao replied that he himself had been present with the Sindhia's army at the battle of Assaye and also during the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon and of Burhanpur; but he could not recollect with accuracy the stipulations of the latter treaty as he had no occasion to refer to it. When the Governor-General stated explaining the terms of the 6th Article of the Treaty of Burhanpur, Ramrao at once said that he could now recollect the arrangement stipulated in that Article viz. a force of 6,000 British troops should be stationed at some place near the frontier of Sindhia's territories and, if requisitioned by the Gwalior Government, to come to its help. But, Ramrao asked, what was the practical bearing of this stipulation in the present affairs as the Gwalior Government headed by Regent Tarabai had not requisitioned the said force for assistance. The Governor-General replied that both the Maharaja and the Regent who had owed their present positions to the British Governments, were 'children incapable of acting for themselves'. Taking advantage of their minority, crooked persons had usurped the whole authority of the State; and through these persons, proceedings had been carried on so inimical to the British Government, that the usual friendly relations of the two states stood almost dissolved. Under the circumstances, the British Government who 'stood almost in the place of the guardian of the infant sovereign', must interfere to save the person of the Maharaja and to 'preserve the Government of the country'.

The Governor-General assured Ramrao that in the present proceedings, the British Government had no purpose of self-aggrandisement, but was actuated by the sole desire of upholding the engagements of the Treaty of Burhanpur and of placing the Government of Sindhia on a firm and secure basis. When Ramrao asked what portion of the expense of the British army brought forward for the above purpose, would be charged to the Gwalior State, the Governor-General replied that no part of the expenses of the force, as far as 6,000 men with a proper portion of artillery was concerned, would be charged; but that the exigency of the case had caused the assemblage of a force very much excess of that number and a great part of the cost of which should, therefore, be borne by the Sindhia's Government. For the details of this and other points, viz. the reduction of the Gwalior army, the increase of the Contingent, the debt due to the Gwalior Government, and fixing a pension for the Regent when the Maharaja should come of age, the Governor-General referred to the memorandum which he had drawn up for the conference, and a translation of which would be placed in the hands of Ramrao and Sambaji Angria. As, however, Sambaji was absent, Ramrao expressed a wish to have an opportunity of speaking more fully of the details with his colleagues, when they could both be present.³ This was agreed to, and the meeting was adjourned to the following day. On the next-day Ramrao along with Sambaji again attended the conference where, besides the Governor-General, Currie, Shakespeare, Captain Durand were also present. The conference was opened by Ramrao reading some letters, which he had received from Bapu Sitolia Deshmukh, and Nana Puro, his son-in-law. The letters stated that Dada Khasgiwala had been given up the very day the Governor-General's letter was received, which, it was hoped,

3 Parliamentary Papers, 1844, Vol. 36, No. 99, pp. 13-15..

would show the Governor-General the disposition of the Regent and the Darbar to accede to all his wishes and propositions; and that the Maharani and the Maharaja would set off immediately to meet the Governor-General at Dholepur. Then Ramrao and Sambaji suggested that the place of meeting between the Maharaja and the Governor-General should be the ground then occupied by the British army - that being the place where former Governor-Generals had been met on the occasion of their visiting Gwalior, and any deviation from the established usage would, it was represented, 'detract from the honour of the Maharaja'. The Governor-General replied that he could not await for the Maharaja's arrival as his camp would move on as soon as the whole of the army had joined the headquarters. He, therefore, suggested that the Maharaja might move out from Gwalior, and the meeting take place at such spot as they should both arrive at on the same day. Ramrao and Sambaji entreated the Governor-General to reconsider the matter, as it was one which in the highest degree, affected the honour of the House of Sindhia. They urged that, if the Governor-General, with the Commander-in-Chief and the British army, passed the Gwalior frontier before the Maharaja had a meeting with the Governor-General, it would be 'a breach of all precedent, and eternally disgrace' the Maharaja and the Government of Sindhia. The Governor-General explained that the occasion was a peculiar one that brooked no delay, that it was impossible the army should be halted to await the Maharaja's coming, and that the present visit could not be looked upon as a precedent for future meetings. The Governor-General, however, added that he would, at such spot as the Maharaja might arrive at, provide for his reception with all honour and in the spirit of friendship. Thereupon Ramrao and Sambaji implored the Governor-General with 'joined hands to weigh well the step he was taking'. They said that every demand or requisition the Governor-General

23rd. They, therefore, asked the Governor-General on what day he would let the meeting take place at Hingona, the first state on the other side of the Chambal. When the Governor-General replied that the meeting should take place on the 26th the chiefs promised that the Maharaja would be ready to meet the Governor-General on that day at Hingona, and to ratify the treaty according to the terms which might be determined on that day. They further said that Bapu Sitolia would come out before the Maharaja, who would accompany Col. Sleeman.⁴

On the 20th when the meeting was being held between the Governor-General and chiefs of Gwalior, a Proclamation containing the reasons for British intervention in the affairs of Gwalior, was circulated among the native Darbars. It gave a brief account of the events leading to the surrender of Dada Khasgiwala to the British Government. It then referred to the clash between the two groups of armymen at Gwalior over the question of handing over the Khasgiwala to the British, and said that the incident created new insecurity to the subjects of the British Government residing on the frontier. The British Government, it went on saying, could neither permit the existence of an unfriendly government within the territories of Sindhia, nor that those territories should be without 'a government capable of coercing its own subjects'. The British Government, accordingly, desired to take upon itself the duty of intervention, not solely for the security of the British interests, but for the execution, according to its true spirit and intention, of the solemn engagement of the Treaty of Burhanpur concluded between Maharaja Daulatrao Sindhia and the British Government in the year 1804. By it, the British Government had engaged to maintain a force, to be at all times ready on the requisition of the Maharaja, to protect the person of the Maharaja, his heirs and successors, to overawe and chastise excitors of

4 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 146.

could make, would be acceded to instantly; but that if the British army passed the Gwalior frontier by crossing the Chambal river before the meeting of the Maharaja and the Governor-General, troops of Gwalior would believe that the latter was coming not as friend, but with a hostile purpose. They were already in a state of the utmost alarm; and knowing that opposition to the advancing British army was useless, they would break out into open mutiny, plunder Gwalior and the surrounding territories and then disperse. Ramrao and Sambaji further said that the Maharani and the Maharaja were ready to start instantly, they would precede their sowaris, and would do anything, within the verge of possibility, to meet the Governor-General at his present encamping ground. Still, the Governor-General refused to arrest the march of the army, and said that it was evident, from what Ramrao and Sambaji had just said, that its presence at Gwalior was necessary for the security of the State of Sindhia and, therefore, it must move on. The Chiefs then asked the Governor-General how much time he could give the Maharaja to come and meet him in the present camp, fixing the day after which, if the Maharaja did not turn up, the British army should cross the Gwalior frontier. After some consideration, the Governor-General replied that the British army would not pass the river Chambal till after 23 December, provided the Maharaja met him at the present encamping ground on that day and signed a treaty drawn up in accordance with the principles laid down in the paper which had been placed in the hands of Ramrao and Sambaji. The details of the said treaty, the Governor-General added, would be prepared on the 21st, and the chiefs present in the conference must guarantee that the Maharaja would sign the treaty. If the chiefs failed to redeem their guarantee, a heavy fine would be imposed upon the Gwalior Government. After some consultation between themselves, the chiefs said that there would be no difficulty regarding the ratification of the proposed treaty, but that it was impossible to get the Maharaja out by the

disturbance in his territories, and to reduce to obedience all offenders against the Maharaja's authority. But the tender age and the helpless position of the present Maharaja, the Proclamation said, rendered it impossible for him to address to the British Government such formal requisition for aid as circumstances would justify him in demanding, under the provisions of the Treaty of Burhanpur. But it would be inconsistent with the good faith and injurious to the good name of the British Government, the Proclamation further said, were it to permit this inability to demand aid to deprive the Maharaja of that friendly support in his dire strait. The Governor-General would, therefore, direct the immediate advance of forces amply sufficient to effect all the just purposes of the British Government to obtain guarantee for the future security of its own subjects on the common frontier of the two states, to protect the person of the Maharaja, and to chastise all who remained refractory.⁵

Meanwhile, Col. Slesman who had been appointed Resident at Gwalior, was advised by the Governor-General to defer any formal entry into Gwalior but to pass through the city communicating to the Maharaja the Governor-General's desire to meet him at Dholepur, and then join the Governor-General's camp to apprise the latter of the results of his interview with the Regent, Maharaja and the chiefs. Thereafter, the Resident would again return to Gwalior to accompany the Maharaja to Dholepur for the proposed interview between him and the Governor-General. According to this plan, Slesman was to reach Gwalior on the 22nd December and leave for the Governor-General's camp on the 23rd. But as proposed in the conference of the 20th the meeting between the Governor-General and the Maharaja was to take place on the 26th. Accordingly, the Governor-General in a despatch dated the 20th informed

5 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 319.

the Resident of his intention of crossing the Chambal on the 22nd, the very day when the Resident would reach Gwalior. The Governor-General's object was to make the necessary arrangements in the form of a treaty, while the Maharaja was in the Governor-General's camp, and to receive the Maharaja's ratification. Thereafter, both the Maharaja and the Governor-General would proceed towards Gwalior. Col. Sleeman, however, reached Gwalior on the 21st and on the same day he communicated to the Gwalior Darbar the Governor-General's intention to cross the Chambal on the next day. At this Sakharamrao, the brother of Ramrao, and Balwantrao, expressed a very earnest desire that this should not take place, as it was usual for the Maharaja and the chiefs to pay the first visit to the Governor-General on the other side of the river. 'They seemed to have this very much at heart', and the Resident thought it his 'duty to mention it.'⁶ The Resident then gave an account of the ceremonies observed in 1832 when the then Maharaja Jankojirao Sindhia first crossed the Chambal to pay a visit to Governor-General Lord Bentinck who, on the following day crossed the river to return the visit. On the 22nd, the Resident received an urgent message from the Governor-General to leave Gwalior and join the Governor-General's camp. When the Maharaja, the Regent and the chiefs were made known of this desire of the Governor-General, they were 'exceedingly earnest in the expression of their hope' that the Governor-General would remain on the other side of the Chambal to receive the visit from the Maharaja. To this the Resident gave no reply, but said to the Regent, in presence of Bapu Sitolia and other principal chiefs, that what the Governor-General desired was the better administration of the government of the country which had so long been rendered impossible by the quarrel among the soldiers at Gwalior. Tarabai then said that she and the Maharaja were entirely under the protection

of the Governor-General and were ready to acquiesce in any arrangement that the latter might wish to make for the better government of the Sindhia's State.⁷ She also authorized Bapu Sitolia and other chiefs to arrange all the details of the said treaty in consultation with the Resident. Col. Sleeman, accompanied by Bapu Sitolia, left Gwalior for the Governor-General's camp.

Meanwhile, as decided at the conference of the 20th, the Governor-General proceeded towards Hingona where the proposed interview between him and the Maharaja was to take place. The first brigade of the British troops crossed the river Chambal on the 21st, and on the 22nd, the Governor-General along with his headquarters followed it and encamped at Hingona. Here on the 23rd Col. Sleeman met the Governor-General. As scheduled, the Resident, after he had received the Governor-General's instructions, was to return to Gwalior to escort the Maharaja to the Governor-General's camp for the proposed interview on the 26th. However, in the evening of the 23rd, the Resident wrote letters from Hingona to both Tarabai and the Maharaja informing them that owing to 'slight indisposition' and 'the fatigue incurred by constant marchings', he had decided to halt at Dhanaila for a day's rest. Therefore, the Resident regretted his inability for not going to Gwalior and he hoped that both the Maharaja and the Regent would come to Dhanaila from where they would be escorted by the Resident to the Governor-General's camp at Hingona. Sleeman added a note of warning to his letters that if the Maharaja failed to reach Dhanaila by 25th December, the Governor-General would march therefore on the 26th.⁸ The Resident's letters reached the Darbar at 9 A.M. on the 24th; and at 8 P.M. on the same day, the Maharaja and the Regent handed over to the Resident's messenger their replies to his letter. They

7 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 148.

8 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 151, Enclosures 1 & 2.

said that as Col. Sleeman had promised to return to Gwalior to accompany the Maharaja for the proposed interview between him and the Governor-General, the Maharaja would wait for the Resident's return. This reply which reached Sleeman at 3 O'clock in the morning of the 25th, further stated that while Sambaji Angria was to remain in the Governor-General's camp, Ramrao and Bapu Deshmukh had been instructed to return to Gwalior in company with the Resident.⁹ By this time, however, the Gwalior troops had taken their positions in the road from Gwalior to Dhanaila, and Sleeman feared that any British Officer or soldier accompanying him to the Darbar might be attacked by them as the latter declared that they had come out to resist the further advance of the Governor-General towards Gwalior, and 'to make the British force recross the Chambal'. The Resident also remarked that the said troops would not respect any engagements entered into by the three Gwalior chiefs present at the Governor-General's camp, namely, Ramrao, Sambaji and Bapu Deshmukh, with the British Government; nor would they allow the Maharaja and the Regent to come out of the capital to ratify such agreements between the two governments. The said three Gwalior chiefs also expressed their doubt if the troops would allow the Maharaja and Tarabai to come to meet the Governor-General; and even if the Regent ventured coming, the chiefs added, the soldiers might offer resistance to her.¹⁰

When Tarabai's letter requesting the Resident to return to Gwalior along with Ramrao and Bapu Deshmukh was presented to the Governor-General for necessary action, Ellenborough asked Sleeman to acknowledge the receipt of her letter and inform her that he had been ordered to return to the Governor-General's camp for further instructions.¹¹ At the same time, the Governor-

9 Ibid., Enclosures Nos. 3 & 4

10 Ibid., No. 151.

11 Ibid., No. 152.

General issued on the morning of the 25th a Proclamation, announcing that the British army had entered the territories of Sindhia as a friend bound by treaty to protect the Maharaja's person and maintain his sovereign authority.¹² A copy of this Proclamation was transmitted to the Regent, along with a Kharita from the Governor-General in which he advised her to use all her personal authority to dissuade the Gwalior troops from coming into confrontation with the British troops. He told her that he had attributed hitherto her regrettable conduct to her youth and inexperience, but still she was being guided by the advice of those persons who had been averse to the maintenance of friendly relations between the state of Gwalior and the British Government. The Governor-General, therefore, warned her : "The present is the crisis of your Highness's fate. You must now decide whether you will henceforward be faithful friend of the British Government, or incur all the consequences of acts of hostility, which must be regarded as proceeding from your Highness, if you do not manifest a sincere desire to prevent them."¹³ The Governor-General further demanded that she should state distinctly, if Bapu Sitolia, Sambaji Angria, and Ramrao Phalke had authority to conclude a treaty in the name of the Maharaja for the reestablishment of the friendly relations between the two states the ulterior object of which was to give stability to the Maharaja's Government. This matter, the Governor-General added, was urgent and therefore, an immediate reply to his Kharita was expected from the Regent. The Resident forwarded this Kharita to Gwalior Darbar on the night of the 25th, and before any reply to it was received from the Regent, the Governor-General on the 26th directed Richard Shakespeare, the assistant to the Resident at Gwalior, to inform the representatives of the Gwalior Darbar present in the British camp that the

12 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 362.

13 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 152.

treaty to be framed on the terms formerly laid down was expected to be ratified on the 28th, and that for every day that the ratification might be delayed beyond that date, a fine of fifteen thousand rupees per diem would be inflicted upon the Gwalior Darbar.¹⁴ In the presence of Resident Sleeman, Shakespeare read this letter to Ramrao Phalke who, however, regretted his inability to communicate the contents of the letter to the Darbar. He said that he had incurred so much odium at Gwalior for the course he had pursued hitherto, that if the communication came from him, it would be supposed to have originated with him, and not with the Governor-General.¹⁵ It would be, therefore, better, Ramrao said, if it was made known to the Darbar in the shape of a Kharita to Tarabai. Accordingly, Resident Sleeman forwarded the letter to the Regent.

Meanwhile, Tarabai and the Maharaja had decided to meet the Governor-General at Dhanaila. Their advanced tents had been sent to the west of Dhanaila. In the meantime, however, a report was circulated among the Gwalior troops that the troops belonging to the battalions of Major General Grey commanding the left wing of the British army had plundered two villages between Antri and Dabra. The Resident enquired into the matter and found that for want of fuel, the troops had helped themselves in collecting the same from some of the houses in the said two villages, to cook their food. Another report was circulated that Bapu Sitolia, Sambaji Angria and Ramrao Phalke had been detained in the Governor-General's camp against their will, and the chiefs and troops around Tarabai expressed their apprehensions of being put under restraint along with the Maharaja, if she ventured to meet the Governor-General. On the 25th Bapu Sitolia and on the 26th Sambaji Angria.

14 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 156.

15 Ibid., No. 157.

left the Governor-General's camp for Gwalior. This, and the Governor-General's proclamation and Kharita of the 25th, the Resident hoped, would dispel the apprehensions from the minds of the Regent and the Maharaja, regarding the intentions of the British Government. It seemed, however, that the Maharaja and Tarabai were no longer willing to meet the Governor-General, and their advanced tents at west-Dhanaila were recalled.¹⁶ On the morning of 27 December, Ellenborough sent a Kharita to the Maharaja. It stated that circumstances having prevented the Maharaja from coming to meet the Governor-General at Hingona, as had been arranged by Ramrao Phalke and Sambaji Angria, the Governor-General himself would now march to Gwalior to visit him. The Governor-General assured the Maharaja that his advance had no other objects than those of establishing the Maharaja's authority over all his subjects, and of giving new securities to the friendly relations which, until interrupted lately by the evil-disposed persons at Gwalior, had subsisted since the Treaty of Surji - Anjangaon. Ellenborough hoped that the Maharaja would order his troops not to offer any opposition to the Governor-General's advance, and that the subjects of Gwalior would be directed to furnish necessary supplies to the British armies. All such supplies would be justly paid for, compensation would be given for all damages which might be unavoidably done, and no injury would be inflicted upon any but such as prefer hostility to friendship and peace.¹⁷ At the sametime, the Governor-General issued a Proclamation, publishing the same fact, and calling on all the faithful subjects of the State to aid in those measures which had no other object than the re-establishment of the just authority of their sovereign, and the maintenance of his Government; and promising the protection of the persons and property of all not found engaged

16 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 155.

17 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 160.

in armed opposition, and indemnification for all accidental damage.¹⁸

Military operations against Gwalior commenced under the personal supervision of Hugh Gough, the Commander-in-Chief in India. The Maratha troops had occupied a strong position at Seondha which they 'most obstinately defended'. It was the intention of Hugh Gough to turn the enemy's left flank by Brigadier Gureton's brigade of cavalry, consisting of the Queen's 16th Lancers under Lt. Col. Macdowell, the Governor-General's body-guard under Captain Dawllins, the 1st Regiment of Light Cavalry under Major Crommelin, the 4th irregular cavalry under Major Oldfield, with Major Lane's and Major Alexander's troops of horse artillery, under Brigadier Gowan. Major-General Sir Joseph Thackwell was put in charge of the whole cavalry division. The 3rd Brigade of Infantry, under Major-General Valiant, was to co-operate with this force. This infantry brigade consisted of the Queen's 40th, under Major Stopford; 2nd Grenadiers under Lt. Col. Hamilton; and 16th Grenadiers under Lt. Col. Maclaren. The enemy's centre was to have been attacked by Brigadier Stacy's brigade of the 2nd division of infantry consisting of the 14th Native Infantry, under Lt. Col. Gardiner, the 31st under Lt. Col. Weston; and the 43rd Light Infantry under Major Nash. To this brigade was attached a light field battery under Captain Browne, the whole being under the Command of Major General Dennis. This force was to have been supported by Brigadier Wrigent's brigade, composed of the Queen's 30th Regiment, commanded by Major Bray; and the 56th Native Infantry, under Major Dick; with a light field battery under Major Sanders. Major-General Littler, commanding the Third Division of Infantry, was to superintend the movement of this column. On the left, with a view of threatening the enemy's right flank, it was proposed to place the 4th Brigade of Cavalry, under Brigadier Scott, consisting of the 4th Light Cavalry under Major

Mactier; and the 10th Light Cavalry under Lt. Col. Pope with Captain Grant's troops of horse artillery. The region through which the whole army under Hugh Gough was to pass, was intersected by deep ravines, and the advance of the army was rendered practicable only by unremitting labours of the Sappers under Major Smith. It was planned that the Kuwari river was to be passed by the army in three divisions on December 29 and proceed directly to Seondha where the Gwalior troops had assembled. However, by the judicious movements of their respective leaders, all the divisions crossed the river in quick succession, and they were in their appointed positions, about a mile in front of Maharajpur, by 8 O'clock in the morning. From this place, the British army was to attack the Gwalior troops at Seondha from three directions - centre, right and left. But an advanced party of the Gwalior troops had occupied strong position at Maharajpur during the night of the 28th. This party composed of seven regiments and twenty-eight guns, opened fire upon the British troops. This made the British Commander-in-Chief to make some alterations in the disposition of the army. General Littler's column being directly in front of Maharajpur, was ordered to advance upon it direct, while General Valiant's brigade was to take it in reverse, both being supported by General Dennis's column and the two light field batteries. As the British troops advanced, the enemy guns began cannonading upon them at quick intervals; but the Queen's 39th, supported by the 56th Native Infantry, drove the enemy in very dashing style from their guns into the village. There a most sanguinary conflict ensued, the Gwalior troops, after discharging their matchlocks, fought sword in hand 'with the most determined courage'. General Valiant's brigade displayed equal enthusiasm in taking Maharajpur in reverse, and the capture of twenty-eight guns resulted from this combined movement. The cavalry, under Brigadier Scott, was opposed by a body of the Maratha cavalry

on the extreme left. Some well executed charges were made by Capt. Grant's horse artillery and the 4th Lancers, capturing some guns and taking two standards.

The Gwalior troops having been dislodged from Maharajpur, General Valiant, supported by the Third Cavalry Brigade, moved on the right of the enemy's main portion at Seondha. During his advance, he had to take in succession three strongly entrenched positions, where the enemy defended their guns with frantic desperation. In these undertakings, the Queen's 40th Regiment rendered valuable services. This regiment captured four standards; but two of its commanding officers, Major Stopford and Captain Coddington, fell wounded at the muzzles of the Maratha guns. This corps was ably and nobly supported by the 2nd Grenadiers, who captured two regimental standards, and by the 16th Grenadiers under Lt. Colonels Hamilton and Maclaren.

The Brigade under General Littler, after dispersing the right of the enemy at Maharajpur, advanced, supported by Captain Grant's troop of horse artillery and the 1st Regiment of Light Cavalry, to make a frontal attack on the central position of the Gwalior troops at Seondha. This column had to advance under a very severe fire, but the 39th Regiment under Major Bray, gallantly supported by the 56th Regiment under Major Dick, carried everything before them and gained the entrenched main position at Seondha. The British troops won the battle, but not without difficulty, nor without very heavy loss; the killed, wounded, and missing amounting to nearly eight hundred. Major General Churchill, Quarter-Master-General of the Queen's forces in India, Major Grommelin of the 1st Light Cavalry and Lt. Col. E. Sanders of the Engineers, were killed. So strenuous a resistance had rarely been

offered by an Indian army when opposed to a British force. Hugh Gough reported to the Governor-General on December 29, 1843: "I regret to say that our loss has been very severe, infinitely beyond what I calculated upon; indeed I did not do justice to the gallantry of my opponents."¹⁹ The Commander-in-Chief added that he had never witnessed guns better served, nor a body of infantry apparently more devoted to the protection of their regimental guns, held by the Maratha corps as 'objects of worship'.

On the same day which gave victory to the British force, under Hugh Gough at Seondha, the left wing of the army under Major General Grey defeated a large body of Gwalior troops commander by Col. Sikander at Panniar, twelve miles south - west of Gwalior. General Grey had marched from Simmeria to Barke-ka-Sarai on the 28th of December, and there he received information of the Gwalior troops being in position at Antri, seven miles in front of his camp, and of their intention of making a night attack upon the British troops. On the 29th General Grey made a march of sixteen miles, being desirous of getting through a narrow valley, extending from Himmatgar to Panniar. The Gwalior troops marched from Antri early on the same day by a parallel movement, took up a strong position on the heights in the immediate vicinity of the fortified village of Mangore, near Panniar, and commenced firing on the British line of baggage. Some cavalry under Brigadier Hanitt, were detached to oppose them. A troop of horse artillery under Captain Brind, also took up a position from which they were enabled to return the enemy's fire with precision and effect; but the cavalry were unable to approach the Marathas, as the ground was intersected by ravines. About 4 O'clock in the afternoon, the Marathas took up a position on a chain of high hills, four miles to the east of the British camp. Here General Grey determined to

19 Gwalior Further Papers, No. 162.

attach them, and arrangements for this purpose were made. The attack was commenced by the Queen's 3rd Buffs, and a company of sappers and miners, who had been detached to take up a position opposite to that occupied by the Marathas. It was directed against the centre of the enemy's force, who were driven from height to height in gallant style, with the loss of their guns. A wing of the 39th Native Infantry having occupied the crest of a hill commanding the enemy's left, rushed down and captured a battery of two guns. However, Brigadier Yates, and Major Earle, successively commanding the 39th, were both wounded. The 2nd Infantry Brigade, under Brigadier Anderson of the Queen's 50th Regiment, arrived in time to put a finish to the action. Although the Gwalior troops under Col. Sikander were completely defeated, Anderson was seriously wounded and his brigade was taken out of action by Major White commanding the 50th Native Infantry,²⁰

On the December 30, 1843, just before the advance of the British Commander-in-Chief to Dhanaila, Lord Ellenborough received Kharitas from the Maharaja and the Regent, stating that they were both about to repair instantly to the Governor-General's camp, and had set out from Gwalior for that purpose. They also intimated that the Maharaja's maternal uncle, Raja Deorao Ehai and Raja Balwantrao had already been sent to meet the Governor-General and receive instructions. Sir Richmond Shakespeare, the assistant to the Resident, was immediately sent forward to meet the Maharaja, and to prevent any collision between his escort and the advanced guard of Hugh Gough's force. The Governor-General also directed Richmond Shakespeare to halt the Maharaja and his followers, wherever they might be found near Dhanaila, and to say that the Governor-General would meet them on the next-day, i.e., the 31st, when his camp would reach Dhanaila. The Maharaja and Tarabai had been proceeding with a

small escort and without tents, and when Richmond Shakespeare met them they were most anxious to proceed immediately to the Governor-General's camp to implore forgiveness at his hands for themselves and their followers for what had taken place.

On the morning of the 31st, the Governor-General's camp arrived at the position occupied by the advanced brigade of the army, two miles and a half beyond Dhanaila. At about 2 P.M. on the same day, the Maharaja and Tarabai accompanied by the prominent chiefs such as Udaji Khatkia, Mulanji, Ramrao Phalke, Deorao Bhanu, Raja Balawant Rao and others, attended the conference at the Governor-General's camp, which was 'turned into a Darbar'. On the right hand of the Governor-General's seat were seated the Gwalior chiefs and the left of the tent was filled with the officers of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief's suite. The usual expressions of courtesy having been exchanged, the Governor-General said 'aloud that he had entered into the Gwalior territory with the British army, as the representative of the British Government, bound by the solemn obligations of the treaty of Burhanpur, to protect the person of the Maharaja, and to maintain his rightful authority over all his subjects'. The Governor-General further said that the object of the advance of the British armies was no other than that of re-establishing in the territories of Sindhia a strong and efficient government, willing and able to preserve the accustomed relations of friendship with the British Government and its allies; capable of 'coercing' the refractory and evil - disposed, and of commanding the army as well as the people. The Governor-General concluded his long speech by addressing the chiefs that under the Treaty of Burhanpur, he considered himself, during the Maharaja's minority, as 'the guardian of his person and rights', and that, as his guardian, he could not see the just authority of the Maharaja usurped

by self-interested persons with impunity. Therefore, he had a right to expect the cordial co-operation of all the Maharaja's faithful subjects for bringing the affairs of the Gwalior State to a satisfactory settlement. The Governor-General desired it to be 'distinctly understood' that, if he were not aided by them, he was resolved to settle the affairs of the Sindhia's Government by his own means and strength. After he had concluded his speech, the Governor-General suggested that if the measure mentioned above was acceptable to the Maharaja and the Regent, they should accompany the Governor-General to Gwalior. To this the chiefs assembled professed the entire willingness of the Gwalior Darbar to accede to whatever the Governor-General should determine for the future conduct of the affairs of the State. They endeavoured to excuse themselves and the Darbar generally, by throwing the blame of all that had happened upon the soldiery, whom they described as beyond their control.

The Governor-General accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief and some of the Gwalior chiefs went to the tent of Tarabai. She said that she had come with the Maharaja to implore the Governor-General's forgiveness for what had taken place. She further said that as desired by the Governor-General, she had directed her father Ghorepare who had incurred the Governor-General's displeasure not to appear at this Darbar, and to return to Gwalior. At this, the Governor-General said that Ghorepare had been the chief cause of the interruption of the existing friendship between Gwalior and the British Government, and all the evils had stemmed by the unwise advice tendered by him to the Regent. Had Ghorepare appeared at the Governor-General's Darbar, Ellenborough added, the latter would have intimated to him the extreme displeasure of the British Government at his conduct, injurious to both Governments and have him directed to retire from the Governor-

General's present Darbar. Tarabai then said that the mischief was not attributable to her father or to herself, but was solely ascribable to the soldiery, who were self-willed and beyond all control. However, as desired by the Governor-General, she would not admit her father henceforth to any confidential communication with her, or to any participation in the conduct of the affairs of the administration, till he had, by his future conduct, proved himself deserving of her confidence and of the countenance of the British Government. Thereafter, the Governor-General referred to the distracted state of affairs prevailing at Gwalior, and said that measures must be taken for the formation of an efficient government for the conduct of affairs during the minority of the young Maharaja. He distinctly told the Bai that as long as she acted with discretion and propriety, he was disposed to admit her to some participation in the administration of the Gwalior Government; but he would 'assuredly set her aside altogether, the instant she evinced a disposition to pursue a different course'. Tarabai replied that she was willing to abide by the above decision. When the Governor-General asked which of the chiefs she considered most faithful, and most competent to act in concert with the Governor-General, in devising the future measures for the conduct of the Government, she mentioned the names of Ramrao Phalke, Raja Balwantrao, Udaji Khatkia, Deorao Bhanu, Mulanji, and Narainrao Bhanu Potnis. These chiefs then accompanied the British Commander-in-Chief and the Governor-General to the latter's tent to negotiate all matters relating to the smooth conduct of the Gwalior Government. As a preliminary measure it was decided that the Maharaja and the Governor-General would issue orders to their respective armies to desist from hostilities against each other; that no Gwalior troops to be allowed to come within three miles of any position taken up by the British armies, to prevent all the possibility of conflict; and that the British armies to advance to the

immediate vicinity of Gwalior on the 2nd January, 1844, and the Governor-General to take the Maharaja with him. It was further decided that the Maharaja would issue a Proclamation declaring that the British armies had entered the Gwalior territories to protect the person of the Maharaja, to support his just authority and to establish a Government capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of friendship between the two States. All faithful subjects of Sindhia were, therefore, directed to give them every aid in their power. On the first day of the year 1844, the Maharaja, on the recommendation of the Governor-General, sent into the city of Gwalior the above Proclamation, countersigned by Resident Sleeman. It stated that all sepoys in the service of the Maharaja would be admitted to the new corps of artillery, infantry and cavalry, about to be formed for the Maharaja, if approved by the officers to be appointed to superintendent the formation of these corps. Those sepoys, who would not be admitted to the new regiments, would be discharged; but they would get all their arrears of pay and a gratuity of three months' allowances.²¹

On January 2, 1844, the whole British army marched to Gwalior with the Maharaja. On the 3rd, the right wing, with the Governor-General's camp, encamped at the Residency. The troops in the city, however, still retained a posture of defence, and, therefore, the Governor-General decided to occupy the Gwalior fort which entirely commands the city. In order to obviate the appearance, and prevent the feeling, that the British had taken possession of the fort themselves, it was planned that the occupation should be effected by the Maharaja's orders, and by troops connected with the Gwalior State, although commanded by British officers. Accordingly, the Governor-General ordered Brigadier Stubbs of the Gwalior Contingent force which was with the left wing of the advancing British army, to occupy the fort under the orders

21 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 389.

of the Maharaja.²² On the morning of the 4th the Gwalior Darbar appointed Udaji Khatkia, in conjunction with Brigadier Stubbs, to the command of the fort. Udaji removed the persons guarding the gates of the fort, and made it over to Stubbs on the afternoon of the same day. The Governor-General then suggested that Brigadier Stubbs be appointed Commandant of the Maharaja's forces to which the Gwalior chiefs agreed.

On January 5, Lord Ellenborough held a conference with those chiefs who had been authorized by Tarabai to negotiate all matters with the Governor-General. Ellenborough explained to them the principles and the provisions of the several articles of the treaty which he intended to propose to the Gwalior Government for ratification. The chiefs pointed out that the first thing to be accomplished was the dispersion of the remainder of the mutinous army, still assembled in force in the city; and the best plan for effecting this, without any bloodshed, the chiefs stated, was to give effect to the Proclamation of the 1st January, viz. a new Gwalior army would be made up of the Gwalior troops and that those not found fit to serve in this army would be discharged after paying them their arrears and a gratuity of three months' pay. The chiefs also suggested that Tarabai's father should be removed from Gwalior, as also the persons hostile to the British Government, viz. Colonel Jacob's son, John, Sikander and his mother, Atmaram, Jaswantrao Bhanu and Bapu Baolia's two sons, Kimmaji and Ghimmaji.^{22a} This proposition appeared reasonable to the Governor-General and, therefore, he himself addressed a Kharita to Tarabai, urging her to send her father to Ujjain; while Col. Sleeman was directed to address a letter to her, requesting that the persons named above should temporarily be removed from Gwalior.²³ Then the

22 Governor-General to the Secret Committee, dated January 21, 1844.

22a Gwalior Further Papers, No. 165.

23 Ibid., No. 166.

Governor-General discussed with the chiefs the various arrangements in the proposed treaty. The Contingent force was to be increased and revenues of certain additional districts were to be assigned for the additional expenses involved. (Article 2). The civil administration of these districts would be conducted by the British government, like those already so assigned (Art 4). There was due to the British Government a sum of Rupees 10 lacs on account of the expenditure already incurred by the Contingent; and a further sum of Rupees one lac on account of advances made to Baizabai. Besides, the charges of the present armament of the British Government amounted to about 10 lacs; and a further expenditure of 5 lacs would be incurred by the British Government in affording compensation for the loss sustained during the war of 1843. Thus, a total sum of Rs. 26 lacs was to be paid by the Gwalior Darbar to the British Government, failing which certain districts of Sindhia named by the British Government were to be made over to the latter and kept with it unless the said sum of 26 lacs of rupees was paid to the British (Art 5). The military force of all arms to be maintained by the Maharaja was not to exceed 9,000 men, of whom not more than 3,000 should be infantry (Art 6). The chiefs whom Tarabai had authorised to negotiate the treaty with the Governor-General were decidedly of opinion that no arrangement whereby any real authority should remain to Tarabai, could be productive of permanent tranquillity. The Governor-General also held the same view.²⁴ It was, therefore, agreed that during the minority of the Maharaja, a Council of Regency should be formed, and that it would act in accordance with the advice of the British Resident. The members of the Council should not be liable to change, or vacancies, occasioned by the death of its members, filled up, except with the sanction of the British Government (Art 8). Ramrao Phalke, whom the

24 For. Pol. Cons. 23 March 1844, No. 433A.

Governor-General found 'very eager to deprive Tarabai of the power of the state', was nominated the President of the Council of Regency. The other members of the Council were Raja Balwantrao, Udaji Khatkia, Deorao Bhan, Mulanji, and Narainrao Bhan Potnis (Art 9). This Treaty²⁵ which was ratified by the Council of Regency on January 13, 1844, further said that the British Government should exert its influence and good offices for maintaining the just territorial rights of the Maharaja and the subjects of the Gwalior, residing in the neighbouring and other native states. (Art 10).

25. Aitchison, Vol. V, pp 426-430.

CHAPTER - IX

CONCLUSION

In 1784 the Pitt's India Act warned the servants of East India Company not to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, or to become entangled in the conflicts between the states of India. Nevertheless from 1798 to 1805 Lord Wellesley chose to seek security for the Company in India not in self-containment, but in the reduction of all the major Indian powers to subordination. This policy, with a short interval of 1805-12, was carried to its logical conclusion by Lord Hastings. Before the end of the year 1818, the Marathas had ceased to exist as a political force and all the principal states of India had been brought into agreement with the Company, which thus became the paramount power in India. This in its turn raised the question whether as the guardian and protector of the Indian states, the Company was responsible for their good government, and should for that purpose, interfere in their internal concerns. The Home Government, while accepting the fact of the Company's predominance over the Indian states, warned it against any interference in the internal affairs of the individual states. But it was one thing to enunciate general policy and quite another to apply it to a bewildering variety of situations spread across India. "The protection of the British dominions from the contagion of contiguous disorder, the rescue of friendly princes from the effects of their misconduct and the necessary assertion of its dignity and authority compelled the Company's government in India to interpose frequently and placed its conduct in constant contrast to its professions".¹ Such occasional interferences in the affairs of the Indian states so much complicated the situation within them that further interference became inevitable. Before

1. Mill and Wilson, History of British India, Vol. IX, p. 254.

long, the Company's servants in India came to the conclusion that the only way out of this vexatious system of constant interference in the affairs of a state, was to annex it to the Company's dominion. The Home Government, too, gave up its inconsistent policy with relation to the Indian states and declared in no uncertain terms in 1842, that in future no just and honourable opportunity of acquiring territory was to be neglected.² The complex problem of the British relations with the Indian states can be best understood by a study of the Company's relations with the state of Gwalior during 1817-1844.

The Maratha confederacy which had showed signs of cracking up since Lord Wellesley's time, was at least dissolved by Lord Hastings' wars of 1817-18. Its head, the Peshwa accepted a subsidiary treaty, and his two lieutenants, Holkar and Bhonsle followed suit. Hastings had also planned to crush the Gwalior Chief, Daulatrao Sindhia, whom he regarded as the most powerful representative of the Marathas. But Sindhia wisely agreed to co-operate with the English in their operations against the Pindaris and thus succeeded in preserving his independent status. Sindhia occupied a peculiar position in the Indian body politic which had been granted to him by Article 8 of the Treaty of Burhanpur (27 February 1804). It had been stipulated that 'no officers of the Honourable Company shall even interfere in the internal affairs of the Maharaja's Government'. Hastings, however, still endeavoured to bring Sindhia under the subsidiary system. The Governor-General had been warned by the Home Government against any interference in the internal concerns of the Indian states. Hastings was reluctant to offend the Home Government on this major issue. His primary motive for accepting

2 Cambridge History of India, Vol. V, p. 582.

the Governor-Generalship had been the salary of £ 25,000 a year, as he believed that a prolonged stay in India would enable him to pay off his enormous debts. Hence he always showed his obeisance to the directors of the Home Government.³ Nevertheless, Hastings' action amounted to interference when he granted Sindhia a loan and occasionally helped him with British military aid against his recalcitrant chiefs and soldiers. In thus granting Sindhia British aid and support, Hastings aimed at giving the Maharaja confidence in the inviolability of British friendship, make him completely dependent upon the Company government and ultimately seek a subsidiary alliance with it. With a band of chiefs disobeying their sovereign's orders, a vast army clamouring for their arrears, and a revenue falling down to an alarming level, Sindhia, no doubt, was badly in need of British help. But he was totally averse to concluding a subsidiary treaty in return for such help. His sole object was to retain his own independence by a negative kind of policy, i.e. of keeping in his own hands the internal government of his possessions, of excluding British interference except in such cases where it might be exercised without any violent encroachment on his authority or in which he might perceive a substantial benefit to himself unattended with any danger of that kind. In order to make Sindhia feel his own responsibility, the Residents at his own court were in favour of discouraging Sindhia's expectation of securing the British aid in overcoming his difficulties. Soon, however, the Company Government found it very difficult to refrain altogether from interfering in the internal concerns of Sindhia, especially after the conclusion of the agreement of 1820 with him, whereby the Gwalior Contingent which had been formed for the suppression of the Pindaris, was to continue on a

3. C.H. Philips. The East India Company, 1784-1838, p. 218.

permanent footing for preventing the revival of the predatory system in any part of the Maharaja's territories. A greater part of the men of this force was Sindhia's; and the whole of it, including the British levy and the British commanders, was paid by the Maharaja. Naturally, therefore, Sindhia could not be denied the assistance of this force against his recalcitrant chiefs. But the besetting problem was that the revolts of these chiefs originated, not so much from their predatory habits as from their legitimate grievances. In the latter case the employment of the Contingent against the chiefs amounted to British interference in the domestic quarrels between the Maharaja and his chiefs. Again, the revolt of some of these chiefs, such as Jose Sikander, Ambaji Ghatke and Mansingrao Patankar, assumed such a serious dimension as to threaten the peace and tranquillity of the Company's territories adjoining Sindhia's, and consequently, the British had to intervene in such cases in favour of the Maharaja. Thus, from an identification of the interests of his state with those of the Company's, and the continuance of the Contingent, Sindhia almost forced the British to give its aid and support to his authority. Consequently, the negligence and misrule of his state were infinitely increased from his expectation that whatever difficulties might arise from them, British support was at hand to relieve and extricate him.

The distracted state of Sindhia's affairs, coupled with his indolence and apathy in rectifying them, and the absence of a male heir to his throne - all these caused a serious apprehension in the minds of the Company's servants in India that after the demise of the Maharaja, a struggle for power at Gwalior would ensue, which would affect the peace and tranquillity of Central India. According to Hindu usage and custom, Daulatrao's senior wife Rukmabai

was to adopt a son and act as Regent during the minority of the boy. But it was known to all that Sindhia's junior wife Baizabai, who had enjoyed political primacy during the lifetime of her husband, would assume the Regency by the support of the majority of the chiefs. In that case, it was apprehended, Rukmabai's cause would be supported with arms by Mansingrao Patankar, the son-in-law of Daulatrao. In order to avoid a clash, the Resident sought the intervention of the Governor-General. Lord Amherst had been sent to India with the instruction to "avoid measures tending to the ruin of an ally at whose misrule we have connived and by whose annihilation we are aggrandised".⁴ Besides an opinion had already been in the air in India which could best be exemplified by Malcolm's instructions (28 June 1821) to his Assistants regarding Sindhia. Malcolm observed that events might have rendered Daulatrao Sindhia virtually dependent on the Company Government, but the latter could claim 'no right of interference in any part of his internal administration, nor should there be any disposition shewn to interference'. On coming to India, however, Amherst found that a new temperament had taken over the agents and Residents at the courts of the Indian states. Charles Metcalfe, who was the apostle of this new temperament, held the view that the assumption of the paramount position by the Company in 1817-18 inevitably imposed upon it the duty of maintaining peace and tranquillity within the Indian states, which the latter themselves were not in a position to discharge owing to the disorganized state of their affairs.⁵ Metcalfe's argument convinced Amherst of the impracticability of blindly following the non-interference policy in each and every case. In 1825 the Bharatpur succession question

4 Quoted by C.H. Philips, Op. Cit., p. 241.

5 E. Thompson, Life of Lord Metcalfe, p. 242.

came up for the Governor-General's decision, and Amherst acting on the advice of Metcalfe, interfered in favour of legal succession to the principality. This action of the Governor-General, however, was severely condemned by the Home Government. Apprehending another disputed succession at Gwalior, and, lest the government in India might be tempted to interfere, the Secret Committee wrote: "We must not interfere on Sindhia's death unless any disputes affect our territories or our allies".⁶ Amherst, accordingly, left the question of succession to Sindhia's authority to be decided by his two wives themselves, without, however, disturbing the general peace and tranquillity. The Governor-General, however, would not give "ipso facto" recognition to a party in power; but in return for certain advantages to the Company Government. While Resident Close and his successor at the Residency Gwalior, Stewart, had repeatedly urged the authorities in Calcutta to make the grant of recognition to a party conditional upon the introduction of reforms in the Sindhia's state by it, Amherst's primary object was to secure a loan of a crore of rupees in return for British recognition. In fact, finance had been stumbling block to Amherst's administration from the start. Ever since 1813, there had been a considerable and progressive growth of the Company's civil and military charges which had exceeded the rate of increase of the revenues. The immense expenditure of the war with Burma in the early part of his administration had seriously deranged the financial prospect of India, and compelled him to have recourse to extensive loans in aid of ordinary resources. A number of Indian chiefs and bankers were induced to lend considerable sums to the Company's Government. The Raja of Nagpur advanced five lacs, the Raja of Benares two, the bankers Lakhmichand and Maniram, nine and a half. Even Bajirao, the ex-Peshwa was prevailed upon to

6 Quoted by C.H. Phillips, Op. cit., p. 242

refund part of the savings from his pension, and he assisted the Company with several lacs of rupees.⁷ The expectation of securing a loan of a crore of rupees from Gwalior also, prompted Amherst to recognise Baizabai as the successor to her husband's authority, as she had been in possession of a large part of the state treasure. Besides, in recognising her the Governor-General would not^{be} involving the Company Government in any dispute regarding the succession to Daulatrao's authority, as immediately after the Maharaja's demise she had assumed the power of the state without any opposition from any quarters. Thus, Lord Amherst in his relations with Gwalior was guided more by considerations of expediency than by the strict principle of non-interference. In the absence of an explicit declaration of Daulatrao in favour of her junior wife, British recognition of her Regency amounted to an interference with the legal rights of his senior wife Rukmabai to succeed to her husband's immediate authority. Even her customary right to adopt a successor to her late husband was interfered with when the Governor-General acquiesced in the adoption of Jankojirao by Baizabai.

But the manner in which Amherst attempted to solve the succession question only opened the door to dissension between the Regent and the adopted minor Maharaja, Jankojirao Sindhia. Although Amherst had only professed to recognise Baizabai in the Regency and not to appoint her to it, he was perfectly aware of the light in which the recognition would be viewed by her,⁸ especially after her consent to the grant of the loan of eighty lacs of rupees had been secured by the British. It was, in fact, considered by everybody, including the Bai herself, as a nomination involving guarantee. This impression must have been confirmed by Hindurao's declaration in the presence of the Resident

7 Mill & Wilson, History of British India, Vol. IX, p. 162.

8 For. Sec. Cons. 1 June, 1827, No. 4.

and the prominent chiefs and ministers that those who did not obey her orders would be punished. Naturally, therefore, the question arose with whom the sovereign authority of the state resided - with the Regent or with the Maharaja who as the adopted son of late Daulatrao Sindhia, was entitled to the sovereign authority of the state. It was this question to which Lord William Bentinck was called upon in 1832 to give his decision. His term as Governor-General coincided with Parliament's debate on the question whether the Government of England should renew the Company's Charter which was due to expire in 1833. Financial matters were bound to loom large in reaching a decision as the existing high costs of the Company's administration in India and its liability to the British exchequer had already strained the resources of the Company. Between 1822 and 1828, the Company's Indian debt had risen, mainly as a result of the Burmese war, from £ 29,388,000 to nearly £ 40,000,000.⁹ Ellenborough, who in September 1828, had been appointed the President of the Board of Control, warned the Directors that the Government would not renew the Company's privileges unless their expenses at home and abroad were greatly and immediately reduced. Accordingly, William Astell, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, warned Bentinck that money might be saved by cutting to a minimum or better still by ending altogether British interference in the Indian states' internal affairs.¹⁰ In short, London authorities had hardened against any further extensions of responsibility lest the states' government should altogether wither away leaving their territories to be administered by the Company, which even within the British provinces had long been notoriously unable to cover its own costs of administration. As for Bentinck, he was 'a man of the left, who carried within himself the ideas of the new age just coming into power'.¹¹ He

9 C.H. Philips. Op. Cit., p. 262.

10 B.C. Vol. I, Letters No. 76 & 101, pp 143 & 196.

11 T.C.P. Spear, Oxford History of India, p. 587.

wanted the Indian people assume more responsibility and therefore, desired less British interference in their affairs. Accepting the Directors' point of view more readily, because he saw in this a useful opportunity to give Indians greater public responsibility, Bentinck openly avowed that 'direct interference is ... the very worst course'.¹² Yet in practice he found the utmost difficulty in applying a general policy of non-interference for in all the states deterioration in the princes' sense of responsibility and lack of interest in government had been allowed to develop unchecked for too long a period to permit them to recover quickly.

Under the circumstances, Bentinck could do little more in fact than faithfully trying to follow the general line of policy indicated by the Directors. When he was called upon to decide the rival claims of Baizabai and Jankojirao Sindhia to the sovereignty of Gwalior, Bentinck at first professed to be guided by the principles of non-interference. If in urging upon the Regent the adoption of Jankojirao's seal, and the proper treatment of the young Maharaja, the Governor-General interfered, he deemed such interference necessary for the good of the country and according to the wishes of the people. At the same time, it was for the welfare of the state that he desired to see Baizabai's administration which owed its 'stability, certainly and perhaps in some measure its existence to British countenance and recognition popular, efficient and prosperous so long as her Regency lasted'.¹³ But he refused to acknowledge her as Regent for life as that would have interfered with the legal right of Jankojirao, who as the adopted son of Daulatrao Sindhia, was entitled to exercise the sovereign authority of the state. When, however, Jankojirao, on attaining the years

12 B.C. Vol. I, Letter No. 231 p. 489.

13 Political Letter to Court, 9 October 1830, para 161.

of discretion, appealed to the Governor-General to put him in full powers, Bentinck refused to interfere either to remove Baizabai from the Regancy or to place the Maharaja in full sovereign authority of the state. Bentinck tried to justify his stand now taken by him, by advancing the argument that it was not clear to him whether by deposing the Bai or by putting the Maharaja to the full sovereign authority, he would be acting in accordance with the wishes or in furtherance of the benefit of the people, although from his personal visit to Gwalior the Governor-General had gathered the impression that the people and the state as a whole were likely to be more benefitted by the continuance of the efficient rule of Baizabai rather than the mere elevation of the unruly Maharaja to the throne of Gwalior. Yet the Governor-General would not interfere in favour of either of the parties. Instead, he left the question of the two conflicting claims between the Maharaja and the Regent 'to be decided by the country itself'. At the same time, however, the Governor-General tried to avoid any immediate clash between the parties concerned by an equivocal advice to both of them. He gave Baizabai to understand that she might continue as Regent so long as she guaranteed the future rights of Jankoji, and told the latter that the British Government would prevent the Regent from doing anything prejudicial to his interests. But the general purport of these recommendations was rather favourable to the continuance of the Bai in authority. As Metcalfe, the Vice President of the Governor-General's Council, remarked, "The appearance of support to the Regent was a virtual interference in her favour, not to be avoided without a declaration in favour of the Maharaja, with whom the right appeared to be decidedly exist, the Bai being only entitled to rule during his minority after which time she must be considered an usurper".¹⁴

14 B.C. Vol. II, Letter No. 539, p. 976.

While professing not to interfere on either side, Bentinck virtually interfered in favour of Baizabai. Although the Governor-General denied having interfered in favour of either of the parties, he at the same time reserved to the Company Government the right to interfere in case the parties clashed with each other, and the peace and tranquillity of the country was threatened. While, however, granting British recognition to Jankojirao whom, to use Bentinck's phrase, 'popular voice' had placed to the sovereign authority of the state, the Governor-General allowed Baizabai to reside within the British territories near the frontier of Gwalior. This encouraged the ex-Regent to carry on intrigues against the legally constituted government at Gwalior. Further, Bentinck instructed the Resident to keep his mouth virtually shut if Baizabai proceeded to Gwalior at the invitation of her supporters there or if she entered into the Gwalior-territory at the head of an army after successfully evading the vigilance of the British authorities. He said to the Resident, "To the British Government it is a matter of indifference whether the Maharaja or the Baee, is at the head of the Gwalior State. Our only object is to preserve the general tranquillity and our own reputation, recognizing such ruler as may be placed by the popular voice at the head of administration".¹⁵ The tenor of this advice was rather an encouragement to a state of growing troubles and disorders than favourable for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity at Gwalior. In fact till the end of December 1832, Bentinck had expected that the Gwalior chiefs and the people would find solace in the continuance of Baizabai's efficient rule. It was Bentinck's ardent wish that the welfare of the state would be best served by allowing Baizabai to rule Gwalior. When, however, the selfish chiefs, finding that their interests would be best served by

15 For. Pol. Cons. 15 November 1833, No. 37.

raising the young Maharaja to the throne, ousted Baizabai with the help of the army, Bentinck concluded that the only alternative to the anarchy and confusion prevailing in the state, was to absorb it in the British dominion. "I should be well pleased if it (Gwalior) fall into our hand. A Maratha mob and army like that can never be useful, and in adverse times might be a great annoyance", the Governor-General said.¹⁶ Thus, towards the end of his Indian career, Bentinck turned into a 'liberal imperialist'.¹⁷

But, inspite of his ardent wish, Bentinck could not annex Gwalior into the British territory because of the prevaricating policy pursued by the Home Government. It was evident from the despatches received from India that the Company Government had been experiencing the greatest difficulty in abstaining from interference in the internal affairs of the Indian states. But Charles Grant, the President of the Board of Control, still hesitated to sanction a complete abandonment of the traditional policy of non-interference in relation to the Indian states. In this, he was greatly influenced by the ideas of the Board's Assistant Secretary, Benjamin Jones who was in charge of the Secret Department of the Board. Jones said that it would be 'discreditable to us to seek pretexts for abrogating the independence which still remained to states in our neighbourhood'. The British Government, Jones continued, should wait "until by some overt act they forfeit their right and title to our protection and support". The case, moreover, should be such as to render it evident to the people of India that 'the assumption of the power of the offending state was absolutely forced upon us'.¹⁸ Thus under the masked principle of non-intervention, Jones tried to find a favourable casus belli

16 Bentinck Papers Portland Collection, Nottingham University, PW.Jf.2074.

17 This is what Prof. Roselli has tried to establish in his book entitled, Lord William Bentinck : the making of a Liberal Imperialist, 1774-1839, (London, 1974).

18 B. Jones, British Power in India, p. 93.

which he found in the chronic state of maladministration in the Indian states leading to their ultimate annexation by the Company.

An inevitable consequence of Bentinck's policy of strict neutrality in relation to Gwalior was the predominance of the army in the affairs of the State. Since the time when Lord Hastings had taken away the best part of Sindhia's army to form the Gwalior contingent, the remaining part was left without any employment as it had been deprived of its field of regular depredations in Rajputana and Malwa which Lord Hastings had brought under British protection. Besides, the task of suppressing revolts in various parts of the State was entrusted, not to the Gwalior army, but to the contingent. Thus the army having no military duty to perform, indulged in politicking. At the time of Bentinck's arrival in India, the Gwalior chiefs and soldiers were divided into two groups - one group supported Balzabai's Regency, while the other opposed her rule and desired Maharaja Jankojirao to assume the full sovereign authority of the State. In the civil war that ensued in 1833 the Maharaja's party came out victorious and raised him to the throne. Thenceforth, the army became conscious of its importance and began to interfere in civil matters such as making and unmaking of ministries. The problem of the army was further complicated by the reform of the Gwalior contingent. It was made more compact, efficient and modern by the reduction of the native elements in it while increasing the number of British officers, and equipping it with guns. This Reformed Gwalior contingent virtually replaced Sindhia's regular army.

Still Sindhia's regular army was large in number, and though it could not be employed to serve any useful purpose, it had to be paid regularly. But the revenue of the State was dwindling sharply. In 1833 the net revenue was 95 lacs but in 1843 it was reduced to 65 lacs. A large portion of the

revenue had to be spent for the maintenance of the vast army. In 1843 the annual expenditure of the Government was Rs.93,53,080 of which Rs.56,38,080 accounted for the cost of the army alone. Besides, there were outstanding arrears of pay of the soldiers. This further raised the amount of deficit between income and expenditure. The financial crisis became so acute that the Government had to lay hands on Gwalior reserved treasury. It contained about 3 crores on the death of Daulatrao Sindhia. By a careful management of the revenue, Balzabai raised the amount to 4 crores. Even on the demise of Jankoji in February 1843, the reserved treasury contained between 3 to 4 crores. But faced with the clamours of the troops for payment of arrears, both Mama Saheb and Dada Khasgiwalla took out a large amount from it, and towards the end of 1843 the reserved treasury contained not more than a crore and a half.¹⁹

The predominance of the army in the affairs of Gwalior was very much irksome to Ellenborough who assumed the Governor-Generalship in 1842. Basically he was a 'military statesman' and throughout his life he retained an eager interest in all military questions.²⁰ Further extension of the Company's dominions formed no part of his policy; and he was desirous on all occasions of respecting the independence of the Indian states. He instructed the Political Agents and Residents at the courts of the Indian states not to interfere in any way, not even by uncalled for advice of the princes of the respective states to which they had been accredited. While, however, leaving the states free to exercise their rights, the Governor-General would not allow any state to exercise its rights in such a manner as might have a tendency to disturb 'the public peace of India'. In the opinion of Ellenborough, disturbances caused by 'direct hostilities between states' or

19 Sleeman, W.H. Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official, Vol.I p. 357. Also Gwalior Further Papers, No. 106.

20 Ellenborough's Political Diary, Vol.I. p.6.

by the outbreaks provoked by the misgovernment within a state, would certainly affect the interests of the subjects of the Company Government and, in such a case, the Company was bound to protect its subjects. Even if such disturbances did not affect the British subjects, Ellenborough held that as the paramount power the Company Government was bound to exercise its authority in such a manner as would most conduce to the happiness of all tribes and nations within the limits of India who might not be living directly under the Company's rule.²¹ In the opinion of Ellenborough, the armies of the different Indian states were responsible for all misgovernment and disturbances and, therefore, it was necessary that the whole military force of India should be brought under the control of the Company Government. As early as 1830, when he had been the President of the Board of Control, Ellenborough wrote to Governor-General Bentinck : "Whether the civil administration of India be conducted by Englishmen or by natives is to us a matter of indifference but for the safety of our power and the maintenance of peace it is essential that the whole military force of India should remain in our hands".²² The background of this despatch was the Russian advance towards the North-Western part of India. Twelve years later, as himself the Governor-General, Ellenborough was faced with a far more serious threat from the failure of Lord Auckland's Afghan wars, and the disorderly state of affairs in the Punjab arising out of the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839. Hence, his views regarding the military supremacy of the Company remained unchanged. He was further strengthened in his opinion by Wellesley's memorandum of 1842 on Indian affairs which said that the peace of India could be maintained by the military strength of the

21 A. Law, India under Lord Ellenborough, pp 26-28.

22 Quoted in G.H. Philips, The East India Company, 1784-1834, p. 271.

British Power'.²³ Thus Ellenborough, while leaving the civil government of an Indian state to itself, aimed at bringing its military organization under the control of the Company Government. His object was to apply this system to every state situated on the east of the Sutlej, and accordingly, he declined to take 'a partial and insulated view' of the Company's relations with any state within that limit. So far as Gwalior was concerned, Ellenborough planned to reduce the size of Sindhia's regular army, and increase correspondingly the strength of the Gwalior Reformed Contingent which was nominally a Gwalior force, although controlled by the Company Government. At first, Ellenborough tried to get this plan executed peacefully by the Gwalior Government itself. This, in its turn, required that the administration of the state must be influenced by the Company Government. The minority of Maharaja Jayajirao Sindhia and his adoptive mother Tarabai required the appointment of a Regency and Ellenborough had Krishnarao Kadam, the maternal uncle of late Jayajirao Sindhia, who was popularly known as Mama Saheb appointed as the sole Regent having all the authority of the State. The Governor-General hoped that the new Regent would be guided by the advice of the Resident and this would enable the British Government to materialise the plans regarding the Gwalior army. But the prominent chiefs among whom Dada Khasgiwala was the senior most and respectable, were opposed to the concentration of all powers of the State in the hands of Mama Saheb whose power was desired by the Governor-General to be 'uncontrolled' and who was not to remain responsible even to the Maharani Tarabai. The chiefs, on the other hand, wished to retain a strong voice for her in the management of the affairs of the government. When, therefore, Mama tried to place the Maharani's actions under a strict system of surveillance and had his niece married to the young Maharaja with

23 A Memorandum on Indian Affairs, dated 4 July 1842, submitted by Wellesley to Ellenborough, B.I. Add MSS. No. 37, 313.

a view to perpetuate his authority in the State, the chiefs forced him to quit Gwalior. Strangely enough, Governor-General Ellenborough did not intervene at this stage to help Mama Saheb retain his position, although at the time of his assumption of the Regency, the Governor-General had agreed to help him with the aid of the British army. The changed attitude of Ellenborough towards Mama Saheb can be explained by the fact that when the Governor-General had Mama appointed as the Regent, he desired the latter to take strong disciplinary measures against the recalcitrant soldiers and reduce the size of the Gwalior army. But Mama did not want to have any confrontation with the troops who had along been in arrears. Instead, he planned to pay off their dues and bring them over to his side by conciliatory means. This would have consolidated Mama's positions as the Regent independently of the British Government. This ran counter to Ellenborough's plan of extending British influence to the Gwalior administration; and, therefore, he did not prevent Mama's downfall.

Mama was dismissed, but Ellenborough still entertained the idea of exerting a controlling influence over the Gwalior Government. By keeping open a threat of severing relations with the State of Gwalior, the Governor-General tried to prevent the Maharani and her party from pursuing an independent line of policy which might stand in the way of extension of British influence to the administration of Gwalior. The Resident was withdrawn to Dholepur and was asked to discontinue official intercourse with any person that might succeed Mama. However, no one was appointed to the office of the Regent, which was virtually left to the management of Maharani Tarabai. The Governor-General hoped that if she could be 'managed' then it would be easier for the British Government to secure a controlling influence over the Gwalior administration. It was with this view that Ellenborough instructed the

Resident to hold direct communication with Tarabai. But the Governor-General found that a direct communication with her could not be held as she was guided by the advice of Gangadhar Ballal, better known as Dada Khasgiwala, the keeper of the Household, and an old, faithful servant of the Sindhias. All letters from the Maharani and those addressed to her passed through Dada, as she could not read or write. Obviously it was under the instruction from Dada that Tarabai informed the Governor-General that while she sincerely desired to maintain the friendly relations existing between the British Government and her, she would not allow British interference in the internal administration of Gwalior. Under the circumstances, Ellenborough came to the conclusion that unless Dada was removed from the head of affairs at Gwalior, the Maharani could not be 'managed'. Ellenborough, therefore, resorted to pressure tactics with a view to securing the dismissal of Dada. He was charged with having obstructed the friendly relations between Gwalior and the Company Government by reinstating to their former offices of the state those chiefs who were 'obnoxious' to the Company Government. The Resident was asked not to resume his duties at Gwalior unless Dada was banished or confined by the order of the Maharani. In order to give weight to this demand, 'an army of exercise' was assembled at Agra with the hope that the mere rumour of the preparation of this force would compel the Gwalior Darbar to dismiss and expel Dada from the state. This bellicose attitude of the Governor-General sharply divided the Gwalior chiefs as to the policy to be pursued in the present crisis. While the pro-British chiefs desired that Dada should be banished as desired by the Governor-General, the party upholding the independence of Gwalior opposed it. However, Dada was confined at Gwalior. But now the Governor-General brought another charge against Dada and demanded that he must be surrendered to the British.

Ellenborough alleged that Dada had committed an offence of 'a serious criminal character' against the Gwalior State by withholding from the Maharani the letter addressed to her by the Resident which contained the demand for the punishment of Dada. This act on the part of Dada amounted to, in the opinion of Lord Ellenborough, a supersession of the Maharani's authority and the transference of all power to himself. And the Governor-General would not allow any subject of the State of Gwalior to supersede the authority of his sovereign. Therefore, Dada must not be allowed to reside within the Gwalior territory; he should be either handed over to the Resident or expelled from Gwalior. The Governor-General's argument by which the above-mentioned charge was sustained was fallacious in nature. It was Maharaja Jayajirao Sindhia, and not Tarabai, who was the 'sovereign authority' of Gwalior. It is true that with the exit of Mama Sahab, Tarabai acted in the capacity of Regent; but upto this time this new position of the Maharani had not been recognised by the Company Government. Secondly, the Resident's letter containing the demand for Dada's punishment was written in Persian language and, as the Maharani could not read or write, Dada, by virtue of his office of the Keeper of the Royal Household, opened it.²⁴ The question whether he had suppressed the letter in question and kept the Maharani ignorant of its contents, became immaterial after he had been confined in accordance with the Governor-General's instruction. Dada's surrender was demanded because the Governor-General found it unsafe to leave him, even in confinement, at Gwalior. The pro-British chiefs were finding it very difficult to hold their position in the face of stiff opposition of their opponents. This opposition would not die down unless Dada was removed from Gwalior. Ellenborough had also made preparations for military intervention

24 J. Hope, The House of Scindea, pp 58-59; John Hope was the Superintending Surgeon of the Gwalior Contingent.

for the purpose of giving 'entire ascendancy' to the chiefs friendly to the Company Government.²⁵

Dada was surrendered, but Ellenborough would not arrest the march of the British army upon Gwalior until he had full security for the future maintenance of tranquillity upon the common frontier; nor until there should be established at Gwalior 'a government willing and able to coerce its own subjects'. In the opinion of the Governor-General the future tranquillity of the common frontier could be obtained, first, by increasing the amount of the Gwalior Contingent and, secondly, by diminishing the vast Gwalior army. In short, Ellenborough was determined to carry into effect Lord Wellesley's views as to the future relations between Gwalior and the Company Government, viz. binding the State of Gwalior with an alliance of subsidiary system.²⁶ Ellenborough took his stand upon the Treaty of Burhanpur (1804) according to which the Company Government had undertaken to assist Sindhia with a military force at his requisition. Although there was no such requisition on the part of the Gwalior Government in 1843, Ellenborough held the view that as the Maharani and the Maharaja were 'children incapable of acting for themselves', it was for the Governor-General to decide, requisition or no requisition, whether the safety and security of Gwalior required a British army.²⁷ But this punctilious reliance on the Treaty of Burhanpur was a very weak point in Ellenborough's procedure. This treaty, though never denounced, had been objected by Lord Cornwallis. To all intents and purposes, though not specifically, the treaty had been replaced by other treaties in 1805 and 1817 which left Gwalior in a position of subordinate alliance. "If ever a treaty was rendered null, that of Boorhanpur was certainly in that predicament,

25 E.P. 43, 74; also Colchester, Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough p. 408.

26 Colchester, ibid. p. 411

27 Parliamentary Paper (H.C) Vol. 36, 1844 No. 99.

and its revival in 1843, after a slumber of forty years, is not one of the least remarkable points in the remarkable course of policy of which that revival formed."²⁸ On 20 December, 1843 the Governor-General issued a Proclamation justifying the British armed intervention at Gwalior which was virtually a declaration of war against the State of Gwalior.²⁹ However at the request of the Gwalior Chiefs, Ellenborough agreed to hold an interview with the Maharaja and Maharani on 26 December. But on the 25th the Governor-General issued another proclamation declaring formally the entry of the British troops into the Gwalior territory. The British army won the battles of Maharajpur and Panniar and on 13 January 1844 a treaty was signed between Maharaja Jayajirao Sindhia and the East India company. Besides the reduction of the Gwalior army and the increase in the amount of the Gwalior Contingent effected by it, Article 8 of the treaty provided that the administration of Gwalior should be entrusted to such persons who would 'act upon the advice of the British Resident in all matters'. No change should be made in the persons entrusted with the administration, without the consent of the British Resident. By Article 9 a Council of Regency was set up and Ramrao Phalke was made its President.³⁰ Thus, while the military clauses of the treaty imposed upon Gwalior a British controlled Contingent, which was virtually a subsidiary force the administrative clauses made the Government at Gwalior dependent upon the support of the British. In short, from a subordinate ally of the Company, Gwalior became one of its dependent states.

Thus, the long chain of events from 1817 to 1844 which formed the

28 Thornton, The History of the British Empire in India, Vol. VI, p. 545.

29 C.A. Gordon, Recollections of Thirty-nine years in the Army, p. 26. Gordon was the commander of the 16th Lancers at the battle of Maharajpur.

30 Aitchison, Vol V, pp 416-20.

relations between the State of Gwalior and the East India Company, was but a successful attempt on the latter's part to reduce that State to dependence upon the Company Government. The attempt began with the extension of the Company's control over Sindhia's army. In 1817 Lord Hastings created the Gwalior Contingent which was a corps of Sindhia's troops financed by him, but officered by the British. In 1820 it was made permanent and, despite the injunctions of the Home Government not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Indian States, it was employed to assist the Gwalior Government in establishing its authority over the recalcitrant chiefs and disorderly troops, making thereby the Gwalior rulers dependent upon it. It became an effective instrument in the hands of the Governor-Generals for the extension of British influence into the Gwalior administration. But a section of the Gwalior chiefs led by Dada Khasgiwala opposed this move of the Company, as it was sure to lead to the loss of independence of the State of Gwalior. Lord Ellenborough, therefore, used a two-edged weapon. While it was planned to reduce the size of the Gwalior army which resisted the British attempt to impose a subsidiary force, the strength of the Contingent was to be increased. When Ellenborough's plan to achieve these objects by influencing the administration of Gwalior failed, he resorted to force. By the Treaty of 1844, the Gwalior regular army was reduced to a minimum, the Contingent strengthened and a Council of Regency consisting of pro-British chiefs was appointed. The Home Government expressed a desire that Ellenborough should assume for the Company the whole civil and military administration of Gwalior during the minority of Jayajirao. But Ellenborough was opposed to the adoption of such a drastic course as that would have antagonised the chiefs friendly to the British. They might have been united with the disgruntled Gwalior army and involve the British army in another conflict more serious

than the first'. Again, had the civil and military government of Gwalior been assumed by the Company, Ellenborough entertained great doubts whether the latter had the practical means of so administering all the Gwalior territories as to make the British administration 'a benefit to the people'.³¹ Malleson writes that this 'masterpiece of policy' made a friend of Gwalior and under its influence 'peace and prosperity' reigned until 1857.³² Jayajirao Sindhia remained loyal to the Company Government during the Mutiny of 1857, and actively helped the British.³³ Thus through the intricate maze of diplomatic finesse, sometimes tempered with caution and moderation and sometimes with firmness, the Company Government achieved its salutary object of bringing the state of Gwalior under complete subservience the edifice of which had been laid in 1803.

31 A. Law, India under Lord Ellenborough, p.111.

32 G.B. Malleson, The Native States of India, Vol. III, p.171.

33 Ibid, p. 209.

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GLOSSARY

<u>Amil.</u>	: A collector of revenue or a farmer of the revenue invested with chief authority in his district.
<u>Amildar</u>	: A collector of revenue under varying conditions.
<u>Amin</u>	: An intendant or assistant in the duties of land-survey.
<u>Bargir</u>	: A soldier in the Maratha army who rode a horse furnished by his employer.
<u>Campoo</u>	: Partially disciplined brigade under European Commanders in the Maratha army.
<u>Dafadar</u>	: A non-commissioned officer of irregular cavalry.
<u>Darbar</u>	: A court or levee.
<u>Dharma</u>	: A mode of extorting payment or compliance with a demand, effected by the complainant or creditor sitting at the debtor's door.
<u>Diwan</u>	: Prime Minister.
<u>Ekas</u>	: Single volunteers. They joined the Maratha Camp bringing with them their own horses and accoutrements. W.H. Jones, <u>Illustrations of Some Institutions of the Maratha People</u> (1818), p. 37.
<u>Inam</u>	: A gift of rent free land, also land so held.
<u>Jahgirs</u>	: Military fiefs.
<u>Jamadar</u>	: A commander of a body of Indian army.
<u>Jamdabkhaneh</u>	: Treasury containing jewels.
<u>Jinsi</u>	: Grand park of artillery.
<u>Kharita</u>	: A royal order, a silk bag in which petitions or letters were enclosed.
<u>Khilat</u>	: A dress of honour presented by a superior on ceremonial occasions.

<u>Nahzarnama</u>	: A memorandum, Grand representation in writing.
<u>Malik</u>	: Master, overlord.
<u>Mukhtar</u>	: An authorised agent, an attorney.
<u>Munshi</u>	: An Indian teacher of languages especially of Arabic, Persian and Urdu.
<u>Musnad</u>	: The large cushion used by Princes in India, in place of throne.
<u>Mutsuddies</u>	: Copywriters.
<u>Paga</u>	: Regular Cavalry
<u>Paltan</u>	: Company of troops.
<u>Pandits</u>	: A man learned in Sanskrit lore.
<u>Parwana</u>	: A letter of authority from an official to his subordinate.
<u>Pattel</u>	: The headman of a village.
<u>Ryots</u>	: Peasants.
<u>Risaladar</u>	: Indian Officer who commands an Indian Corps of horse in one of the English regiments.
<u>Sanad</u>	: A Charter, a letter of authority.
<u>Shastris</u>	: A man of learning, one who teaches any branch of Hindu learning, such as law.
<u>Shroff</u>	: A money-changer, a banker.
<u>Silahdar</u>	: A soldier who finds his own horse and arms.
<u>Soucar</u>	: An Indian banker.
<u>Tarraf</u>	: A division of country composed of an indefinite number of villages.
<u>Tika</u>	: A mark on the forehead made with coloured earth or unguents, as an ornaments, to mark sectarial distinction, accession to the throne, at betrothal, etc.
<u>Vakil</u>	: An attorney, an authorised person.